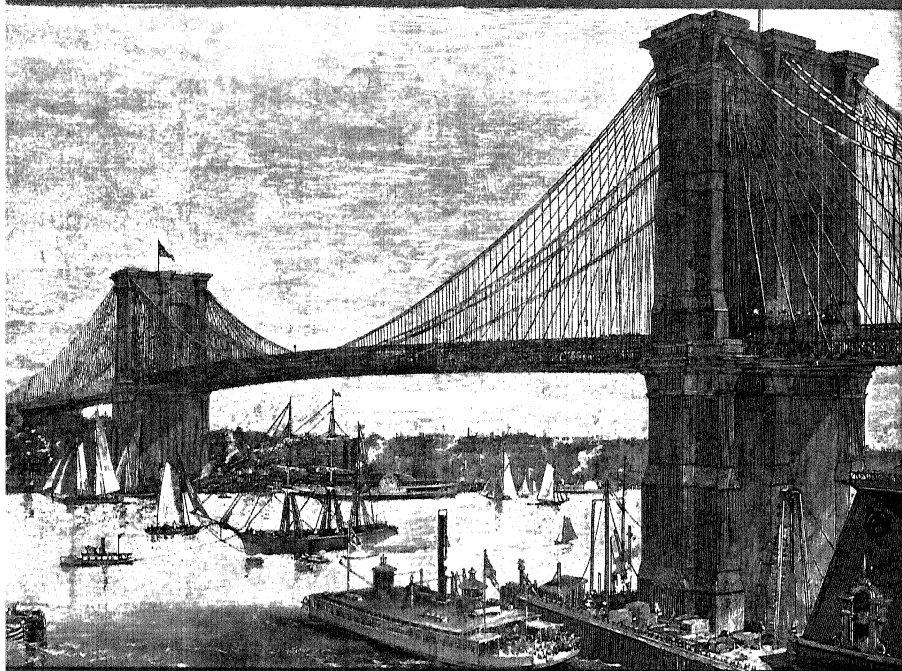


American Architecture and Other Writings

By MONTGOMERY SCHUYLER

Edited By WILLIAM H. JORDY and RALPH COE



A John Harvard Library Book

*American Architecture
and Other Writings*

by Montgomery Schuyler

EDITED BY

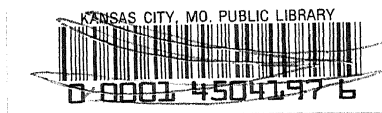
WILLIAM H. JORDY AND RALPH COE

Praised in 1914 by Frank Lloyd Wright as the single critic who was sympathetic to his work and by Lewis Mumford twenty years later as the most significant turn-of-the-century American architectural critic, Montgomery Schuyler followed the development of American architecture from 1880 to his death in 1914. Throughout these years he observed from one firm point of view the flamboyant spectacle of a wealthy nation building its own image.

In his comments on Victorian Gothic, Richardsonian Romanesque, the esthetics of bridge-building, the rise of the skyscraper, the Beaux Arts reaction, and the works of Louis Sullivan and the early Wright, Schuyler reveals the dilemma of a progressive architectural idealism forged, in the mid-nineteenth century, called upon to assess the simultaneous appearance of academism and early modern architecture. The time: a critical moment in American cultural history.

The core of this two-volume edition of Schuyler's writings is his *American Architecture*, a collection of seven essays published in book form in 1892. These essays have long been recognized as among the most perceptive and urbane criticism of American architecture. The book has been out of print since its original publication. Moreover, it does not contain any of Schuyler's work written after 1892, and therefore omits some of his major contributions. Readers have hitherto had to search for scattered articles by Schuyler that were buried in back numbers of

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Editor-in-Chief

American Architecture

and Other Writings

by
MONTGOMERY SCHUYLER

Edited by William H. Jordy and Ralph Coe



IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

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Preface

In 1891 Montgomery Schuyler published a volume of his essays under the modest title *American Architecture — Studies*. Culled from magazine articles which had appeared during the preceding decade, the seven essays in this volume have long been recognized as among the most perceptive, urbane, and progressive critical writings on certain aspects of nineteenth-century American architecture. Although much consulted by historians of both American culture and modern architecture, *American Architecture* has been out of print since the sale of its initial edition.

The essays included in *American Architecture*, however, represent only a lesser fraction of Schuyler's extensive architectural criticism of American developments from the seventies to the year of his death in 1914. Many of his significant writings do not appear in this early volume. Moreover there has hitherto been no attempt to survey Schuyler's criticism as a whole. Hence we have arranged an extensive sampling of Schuyler's criticism so that it parallels the historical development of American architecture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The essays collected in *American Architecture*, together with the vignettted line drawings of the original publication, have been distributed among the other writings.

The editing of Schuyler's essays has presented certain difficulties. The least important, but the most vexatious, is inconsistency in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and the like. Since Schuyler published in many different magazines, copyediting style inevitably changed from periodical to periodical. Variations even occur within single articles. We have maintained the original style of each article, correcting for consistency within the essay when necessary.

The second problem centers in Schuyler's fondness for the elaborate, elliptical allusion, maddeningly calculated to conceal its source. For example, remarks are attributed to an "English visitor"; an article appears in "an architectural journal"; certain bridges in the "southern tier" of New York State are "within sight of the Erie railroad." The frequent difficulties in tracing the sources of such nebulous references are compounded by the nineteenth-century habit of lavish literary allusion. Since Schuyler was broadly read and, according to his son Robert Livingston Schuyler, possessed an uncanny memory, these allusions have occasionally not only shamed his editors but puzzled specialists as well. Let it be said, however, that the reason references have sometimes gone unlocated is not want of trying. Like many journalists with prodigious memories, Schuyler did not always go back to his sources for his allusions. Hence minor inaccuracies are frequent.

Finally, Schuyler's numerous references to now forgotten buildings present the greatest problem in editing his criticism. In every instance we have attempted to ascertain the architect, address (especially important for research in New York City architecture), and date of the building, as well as whether or not it still exists. Here the contributions of hundreds of correspondents have been more helpful than guides and directories. Those who wish such documentation as is available, as well as additional illustrations, may begin by consulting the following works. On architects, the most convenient starting point is Henry F. and Elsie R. Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)* (Los Angeles, 1956) and the *Dictionary of American Biography*. On the architecture of New York City, the basic guidebook sources appear in Winston Weisman, "Commercial Palaces of New York: 1845-1875," *Art Bulletin*, 36 (Dec. 1954), 285-302. Of these, the most useful have been *Moses King's Handbook of New York City* (Boston, 2nd ed., 1893); *Record and Guide, A History of Real Estate, Building and Architecture in New York during the Last Quarter of a Century* (New York, 1898); Karl Baedeker, *The United States* (Leipzig, 1909), which is helpful as well for the architecture of other cities; finally, Isaac N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island* (New York, 6 vols., 1915-1928). Chicago architecture is covered in the bibliography listed on p. 246n below. On bridges, see comparable listings on pp. 331n and 332n below, together with the bibliographies contained in the volumes cited. On Richardson, the standard work is Henry-Russell Hitchcock,

The Architecture of H. H. Richardson and His Time (New York, 1936; a second, revised edition is scheduled for publication); on Sullivan, Hugh Morrison, *Louis Sullivan* (New York, 1935), John Szarkowski, *The Idea of Louis Sullivan* (Minneapolis, 1956), Albert Bush-Brown, *Louis Sullivan* (New York, 1960), and, soon to appear, Richard Nickel, *The Complete Works of Louis Sullivan*; on Wright, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *In the Nature of Materials* (New York, 1942) and Grant C. Manson, *Frank Lloyd Wright: The First Golden Age* (New York, 1958). The most recent general architectural history including coverage of the period of Schuyler's writing is John Burchard and Albert Bush-Brown, *The Architecture of America: A Social and Cultural History* (Boston, 1961).

To the numerous correspondents — about three hundred in all — who helped on individual queries, we are most grateful. Certain individuals and institutions were particularly helpful. In New York City, we are especially indebted to Philip A. Rees and A. K. Baragwanath of the Museum of the City of New York and to Robert C. Goodrich of the Engineering Societies Library, together with the staffs of the New-York Historical Society and the New York Public Library; in Chicago, to the staffs of the Burnham Library of the Chicago Art Institute, the Chicago Historical Society, and the Chicago Public Library; in the Twin Cities, to the fine arts and history staffs of the Minneapolis Public Library and to Lois M. Fawcett of the Minnesota Historical Society; in Buffalo, to Edith B. Krebs of the Buffalo Public Library; in Newport, to Gladys E. Bolhouse of the Newport Historical Society; on the building history of the New York State Capitol, to Kenneth DeKay of the Legislative Research Office.

Fellow historians have also been most generous. Henry-Russell Hitchcock read the introduction in part, and Robert Livingston Schuyler read it all. Both made helpful suggestions. John Jacobus gave assistance on Viollet-le-Duc and the Néo-Grec movement, as did Allen Brooks on Leopold Eidlitz's architecture (not, however, on Eidlitz's architectural theory), and Wayne Andrews on some aspects of New York City architecture. James D. van Trump assisted on problems pertaining to Pittsburgh. Alan Burnham, the editor of the Richard Morris Hunt Papers, was exceptionally cooperative in supplying information and checking the accuracy of the footnoting for Schuyler's essay on Hunt. Most helpful of all was Winston Weisman. Time and time again he drew on his extensive scholarship of nineteenth-century

building in New York City to answer questions which must otherwise either have consumed months of labor on our part or gone unanswered. He could not have been more generous with his information had these volumes been his own.

Finally, a word as to the respective contributions of the two editors. The basis for the introduction to these volumes was an essay by Mr. Coe. This was elaborated and extended — especially with respect to the material on Eidlitz, bridges, the Beaux Arts, and the final conclusion — by Mr. Jordy. The selection, ordering, and editing of Schuyler's writing was done by Mr. Jordy. The indexing was done by Mr. Coe and Mr. Jordy.

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EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

ON THE FOOTNOTES

All footnotes citing magazine articles by Schuyler appear in a short form that uses keyed references to the chronological bibliography at the end of volume II (pp. 641-653). For example, "'The Metropolitan Opera House' (1883-C)" indicates that the full citation of the facts of publication appears as the third entry under 1883 in the bibliography.

Page numbers appearing *outside* the parentheses in a keyed reference indicate that the passage cited is reprinted here, and these numbers refer to the pagination of this edition. For example, "'Monumental Engineering' (1901-B), p. 345" directs the reader to page 345 above or below in this John Harvard Library edition.

Page numbers appearing *inside* the parentheses in a keyed reference indicate that the passage cited is *not* reprinted in this edition, and these numbers refer to the pagination of the periodical in which the article originally appeared. For example, "'The New Produce Exchange' (1884-C, p. 210)" directs the reader to page 210 of *Manhattan Magazine*, 4 (Aug. 1884).

A dagger (†) before certain references signifies that Schuyler's article as originally published contained one or more photographs of the building in question but that these are not here reproduced.

Footnote 58 on p. 502 explains in detail the significance of the degree symbol (°) after certain dates in "The Works of the Late Richard Morris Hunt": for example, 1878°. Briefly, the degree symbol indicates that these dates are derived from an unpublished manuscript written by Hunt's widow.

Schuyler's footnotes are distinguished by an asterisk (*) and the bracketed editorial insertion [Schuyler's Note.]. The editors' footnotes are numbered.

Montgomery Schuyler

In 1914, in one of his most important essays, Frank Lloyd Wright mentioned that for twenty-one years he had charted a lonely path, “unhonored, ridiculed; Montgomery Schuyler was the one exception to the rule.”¹ Twenty years later it was Lewis Mumford’s *Brown Decades* (1934), seminal in so many respects, which revived the forgotten turn-of-the-century reputation of one of America’s most perceptive architectural critics. “Montgomery Schuyler,” Mumford wrote in a later book, “whose architectural criticisms continued to appear in *The Architectural Record* [until 1914], never hauled down the flag: he, who had been such an eager and searching exponent of the new architecture when he did a classic monograph on the works of Adler and Sullivan, almost at the end of his career in 1912, published an article on Frank Lloyd Wright—‘an architectural pioneer.’ ”² Mumford was discussing the crushing assault of Beaux Arts academicism on the remnants of progressive architecture during the early twentieth century. This assault overwhelmed Louis Sullivan and eventually the entire Chicago School of naked skyscraper construction, as well as the suburban Chicago School working around Wright after 1900, save for Wright himself. In California around 1915, it seems practically to have ended the careers of the Greene brothers, Charles Sumner and Henry Mather, and to have brought that of Irving Gill almost to a halt. It would have swept away Wright’s career, too, except for that valiant “arrogance” which he later so thoroughly publicized. And throughout the battle, Schuyler “never hauled down the flag.”

¹ Frank Lloyd Wright, “In the Cause of Architecture II,” *On Architecture*, ed. Frederick Guthrie (New York, 1941), p. 47.

² Lewis Mumford, *Roots of Contemporary American Architecture* (New York, 1952), p. 15.

Following Mumford's lead, architectural and cultural historians have unearthed Schuyler's architectural credo piecemeal from contemporary periodicals, from somewhat obscure monographs on the work of two Chicago firms—Adler & Sullivan and Burnham & Root—and especially from a volume, consisting of reprints of articles, which appeared in 1892 under the nondescript title *American Architecture—Studies*. Thus portions of Schuyler's trenchant remarks on the Brooklyn Bridge, the Chicago School, the Columbian Exposition, on Sullivan, and on Wright have gradually become familiar to students of American culture. Schuyler has appeared as a consistent champion of progressive architecture, fully meriting Wright's and Mumford's praise.

In two respects, however, Schuyler's position as seen today is exaggerated. It is made to appear both unique and infallible. Detailed comparisons with the writings of his contemporaries would take us far afield. Yet it should be mentioned at least that Schuyler shared his progressive point of view with a cluster of more or less like-minded commentators, notably his colleagues at the *Architectural Record*, Russell Sturgis, Barr Ferree, and Herbert Croly. In critical acumen they ranged from Sturgis, who was perhaps closest to Schuyler in enlightenment and at the time was more prominent, to Croly, whose temporizing as a critic gave evidence more of good will than of keen vision. Croly's social convictions, coupled with his lack of insight as a critic, eventually encouraged his abandonment of architecture for *The Promise of American Life* and his editing of the *New Republic*, both of which brought fame.

If the relative uniqueness of Schuyler's position with respect to other contemporary critics cannot be fully documented here, the degree of his fallibility cannot be ignored. Selective quotation has magnified our impression of his prescience. True, he never quite "hailed down the flag"; but the flag occasionally dipped, once or twice dragging the ground, and at the end was hardly flourished as strongly as we, with the advantage of hindsight, might have wished. Too many have emphasized the notable correctness of Schuyler's criticism at particular moments without examining its full development.

Or should we rather speak of his *lack* of development? Precisely here, in this lack of development, lies the paradoxical value of his career. He brought to architectural criticism a cluster of ideals inherited from the mid-nineteenth century—the same ideals which, in part, fired Richardson, Sullivan, Wright, and almost every other progressive

architect practicing in the United States between 1870 and World War I. For Schuyler, the critical ideals remained fixed. Hence we can watch the application of this critical constant through those forty-five years which mark a fascinating episode in American cultural history, as well as a tense one in the history of modern architecture. In discussing the Victorian Gothic of the fifties and sixties or Frank Lloyd Wright's prairie houses after 1900, Schuyler's critical ideals permitted him to evaluate buildings, first with a growing sureness, which culminated in his classic essays of the early nineties, then with uncertainty about both the emergent Beaux Arts and the waning progressive tendencies. Hence the full significance of Schuyler's career is to be seen by considering the way in which his mid-nineteenth-century architectural ideals eventually conflicted with an architectural development which was moving simultaneously toward the formalism of the Beaux Arts and the "organicism" of what we have come to call modern architecture. Though it did sometimes vacillate, Schuyler's esthetic was clearly opposed to formalism, while it was just as clearly directed toward the organic ideal. But there were limits to Schuyler's modernism. These limits and the reasons for them illuminate the dilemma of a protomodern esthetic facing a development that was unfolding toward the full modern of the twentieth century. To what extent could this criticism embrace the development? Where it failed, why did it fail? Meanwhile, failure aside, since Schuyler's critical tenets were widely shared by progressive architects during the last third of the nineteenth century, and especially in the Anglo-American world, his writings illuminate a cluster of ideals from which much of the modern movement originated. So much, indeed, that but for the existence of these ideals, modern architecture would be something entirely different from what it has become.

Descended from Dutch stock which had settled Beverwyck (Albany), New York, as early as 1650, Montgomery Schuyler was born August 19, 1843, in Ithaca, the son of the Reverend Anthony and Eleanor (Johnson) Schuyler.³ In 1860 he entered Hobart College, where his studies were predominantly literary. Leaving Hobart without graduating, he eventually went to New York in 1865. Here he soon joined

³ Biographical details are largely from the entry on Schuyler in the *Dictionary of American Biography*, 16, 475f, by Eleanor M. Sickels.

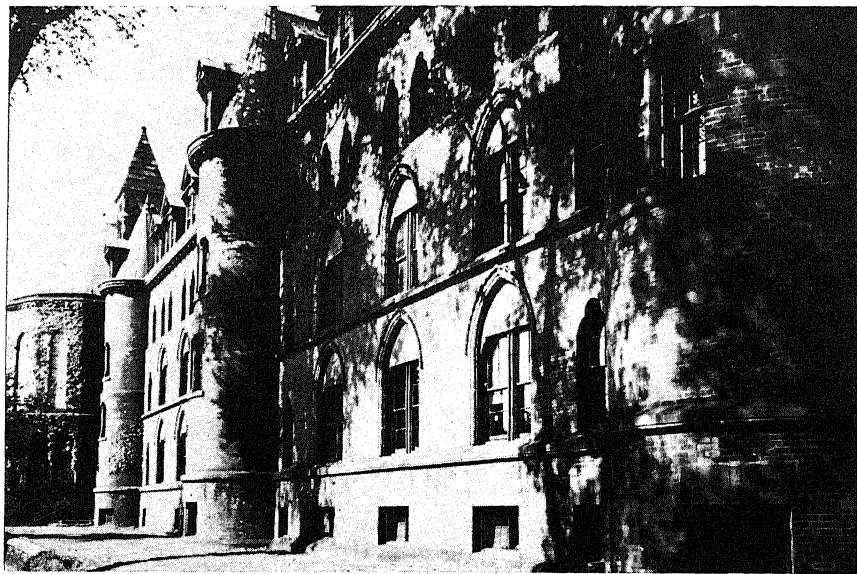


Fig. 1. Russell Sturgis. Farnam Hall, Old Campus,
Yale University, New Haven, Conn., 1869.

the brilliant group of young writers gathered around Manton Marble, who was at that time editor and owner of the New York *World*. Schuyler coupled his work on the news desk with literary reviewing, activities he continued throughout his life. By our less leisurely standards, his architectural essays occasionally suffer from the belletristic vice of arcane literary allusion too elaborately sprinkled throughout; but his literary bent also accounted for the urbanity, precision, and wit of a convoluted style typically nineteenth-century in character.

While Schuyler was on the *World*, his preparation for his future as an architectural critic began. The major elements in this preparation eventually coalesced to create what Schuyler termed his "Point of View." What were these elements? During the sixties Schuyler was doubtless caught up in the Ruskinian idealism which pervasively influenced American esthetic life from the fifties through the Centennial Exposition of 1876. He must have known of the publication here in 1863 and 1864 of the Ruskinian and Pre-Raphaelite journal, *New Path*. This was not edited by a single individual, but by a group of enthusiasts, including the architects Peter B. Wight and, as its major con-

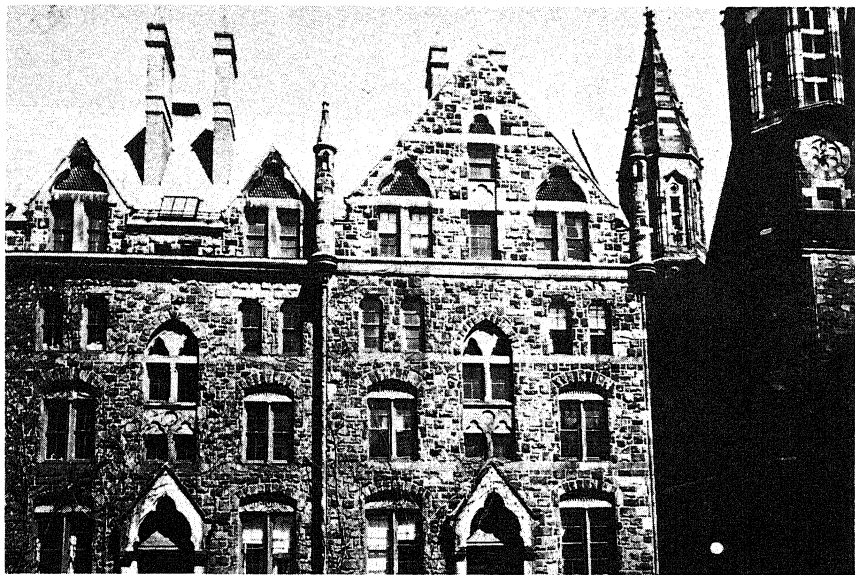


Fig. 2. Russell Sturgis. Durfee Hall, Old Campus, Yale University, New Haven, Conn., 1871. Battell Chapel, 1876, appears on the right.

tributor, Russell Sturgis. These two architects were partners from 1863 to 1868, and both erected notable Ruskinian buildings during this and following decades. Between 1869 and 1886, for example, Sturgis' Farnam, Laurence, and Durfee dormitories, as well as Battell Chapel, went up on the Old Campus at Yale, a complex of buildings which probably represents the finest existing example of Ruskinian design on a large scale by any American (Figs. 1, 2). More precisely, the broad massing, high and angular, with its restrained ornament related to structure, minimized Ruskin's pictorial intricacy of detail and shadow, to reveal the more architectonic inspiration of Ruskin's disciple, George Street, and Street's protégé, Philip Webb.⁴ In 1862,

⁴ On Street and Webb, see Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Baltimore, Md., 1958), chaps. 10 and 15 *passim*; see also H.-R. Hitchcock, "G. E. Street in the 1850's," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 19 (Dec. 1960), 145-171. Until recently Sturgis' finest building was traditionally assumed to be his Farmers and Mechanics Bank (1876) in Albany, N. Y., built in a simplified Louis XII style. More recently, the less literalistic buildings at Yale (Farnam especially) have seemed quite as, and possibly more, important. The construction dates for Sturgis' four buildings for the Old Campus at Yale are Farnam (1869), Durfee (1871), Battell Chapel (1876), and Laurence (1885-1886). All are illustrated in "Russell Sturgis's Architecture" (1909-F), the basic source on Sturgis' architecture, where, however, Schuyler reverses the identifications and dates of Farnam and

Wight had won an important competition for the design of the National Academy. After some changes from the competition drawing, the completed building turned out to be a too literalistic and pinched version of the Doge's Palace, which was of course one of Ruskin's principal enthusiasms in *The Stones of Venice* (Fig. 3). Public opinion vastly overpraised it in its day. For years it was one of New York's most conspicuous monuments. Between 1863 and 1866 Wight also completed a building for the Old Campus at Yale. In this Art Building, or Street Hall, as it came to be called after its donors, John Ferguson Weir headed the first professional art department to be established by any institution of higher learning in the country. Here too, appropri-

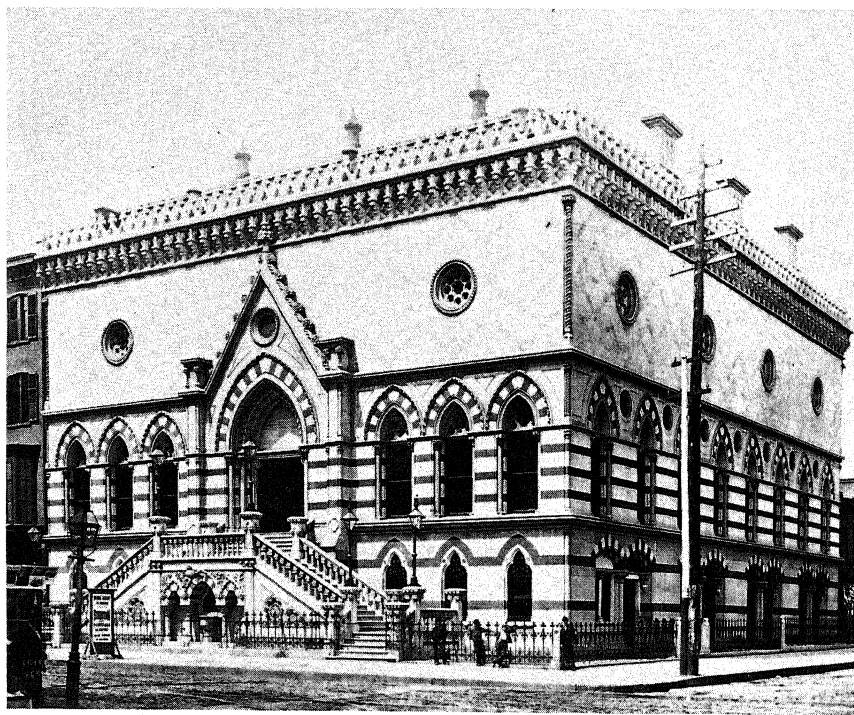


Fig. 3. Peter B. Wight. National Academy, New York City, 1862-1865.

Durfee. Schuyler also discusses the Old Campus in "The Work of Charles C. Haight" (1899-C). Compare this verdict on the quality of the Yale complex with that of H.-R. Hitchcock (see below, p. 122n) on the Victorian Gothic complex at Trinity College, Hartford, Conn.

ately enough, was the first home at Yale for James Jackson Jarves' pioneer collection of Italian primitives, which had been assembled in the same spirit of Ruskinism and Pre-Raphaelitism as the building.⁵ Wight's Art Building stands today not far from the dormitories and chapel of his friend Sturgis.

Other interests lured both architects away from design in the seventies and eighties. Sturgis turned to scholarship and freelancing in New York, where he became a fellow contributor with Schuyler to the *Architectural Record*. Wight left New York to become a partner in a Chicago firm. There he eventually turned his attention to fireproofing, heading a journal on the subject and working with a materials manufacturer on this technology, which burgeoned in Chicago after the holocaust of 1871.⁶ During the sixties Schuyler must have become acquainted with these men, their journal, their buildings, and their ideals—all of which represented the architectural *avant garde* of the decade.

Although Schuyler continued on the *World* until 1883, in 1874 he undertook additional work as a member of the editorial staff of the shortlived *New York Sketch-Book of Architecture*, which appeared for a mere three years, through 1876. It was a monthly portfolio of four plates, partly line drawing and partly photographs, each set fronted by a sheet of purely descriptive captions. In fact the *Sketch-Book* was a significant forerunner of the professional journals to follow. The first of consequence, the *American Architect and Building News*, appeared the year the *Sketch-Book* ended. Not until the eighties did professional journals proliferate so that they replaced books as the principal sources of information about current building.⁷

⁵ On Wight's National Academy, Fourth Ave. and 23rd St. (1862-1865, demolished), see the elaborate portfolio, *National Academy of Design: Photographs of the New Building* (New York, 1866). On Street Hall, see TheodoreSizer, ed. *The Recollections of John Ferguson Weir* (New Haven, 1957). On Pre-Raphaelitism generally in the U. S., see Francis Steegmuller, *The Two Lives of James Jackson Jarves* (New Haven, Conn., 1951); David H. Dickason, *The Daring Young Men* (Bloomington, Ind., 1953); Benjamin Rowland, ed. *The Art-Idea*, by James Jackson Jarves (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), introduction.

⁶ Biographies of both Sturgis and Wight appear in the *Dictionary of American Biography*. See also Schuyler's obituary of Sturgis (1909-E).

⁷ Prior to the *New York Sketch-Book*, the only major architectural periodical able to sustain itself was the *American Builder* (Chicago and New York), Mar. 1868-May 1895, which became *Builder and Woodworker* in 1879. This journal was, however, directed at the builder, being specifically hostile to architects. Simultaneous with the *New York Sketch-Book*, but established a year earlier and possibly an influence on it, was the *Architectural Sketch Book* (1873-1876), published in Boston by the Portfolio Club.

The *Sketch-Book* was the more significant because it included the most progressive projects of its day. Victorian Gothic designs still predominated, but designs more important for the future challenged this waning style. Prominent were Richardson's early ventures in a "Romanesque" vein, together with his early shingled houses and some by Charles F. McKim. There were several Colonial houses, mostly records of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century buildings. A few venturesome neo-Colonial designs, however, prophesied the drastic reorientation of esthetic sensibility to come.⁸ The ideals of the Beaux Arts were illustrated in Richard Morris Hunt's Lenox Library, realized between 1870 and 1875 as one of the nuclei of what eventually became the present New York Public Library (Fig. 145). This, the first major American monument of École classicism, tended to replace Wight's National Academy in the esteem of New York connoisseurs and, as such, provided a measure of the gradual drift of enlightened taste toward Beaux Arts ideals.⁹ In the early seventies, however, designs in both neo-Colonial and Beaux Arts were exceptions.

Editorially, Schuyler's position on the *Sketch-Book* can hardly have been of importance for him, since, in his anonymous capacity, he can have done little more than assist in selecting pictures for publication and providing their captions. But the *Sketch-Book* furnished Schuyler with a base line for his criticism, since he returned repeatedly in his later essays to the buildings, the men, and the implicit ideals illustrated in its pages. At this time too, if not earlier, Schuyler came to know Henry Hobson Richardson, just as he was beginning to evolve a

⁸ An editorial foreword, dated Dec. 22, 1873, to the first number specifically noted the editors' interest in "preserving some record of the early architecture of our country now fast disappearing. For this purpose they would most gratefully welcome any sketches, however slight, of the beautiful, quaint and picturesque features, which belong to so many buildings, now almost disregarded, of our Colonial and Revolutionary period." Incidentally, the *Sketch-Book* was the first American architectural periodical to use photography, its initial photograph recording the ramshackle condition of Bishop Berkeley's house in Newport. Notable among the neo-Colonial designs were several interiors by young Charles McKim. See Vincent Scully, *The Shingle Style* (New Haven, 1955), especially chap. 2, for a discussion of the *Sketch-Book* with respect to the neo-Colonial revival.

⁹ By the time the Lenox Library was torn down in 1912, with the completion of the present New York Public Library, it was so highly regarded that an organized public protest group led by Henry Clay Frick attempted vainly to obtain permission and funds to move the building into Central Park, locating it on the site of the Arsenal, in order to preserve it. *American Architect and Building News*, 102 (July 3, 1912), 7f; *Architectural Record*, 32 (Dec. 1912), 58of. On the relation of the Lenox Library to the New York Public Library, see below, p. 523n.

personal style which would shortly mark him as the greatest American architect of his generation. Before his removal from New York to Boston in 1874, Richardson served briefly as the initial editor of the *Sketch-Book*, although, as Schuyler later asserted, Richardson deputized practically all of his editorial duties to the young McKim, who had been for several years a draftsman in his office.¹⁰ When Schuyler served a short term as managing editor of *Harper's Weekly* from 1885 to 1887, he took care to publish Richardson's drawings for the Allegheny County Court House and Jail in Pittsburgh.¹¹ Later, in 1891, he initiated his long association with the *Architectural Record* with discussions in its first two issues of the influence of Richardsonian Romanesque on American architecture.

Of all his architect friends, however, it was not Richardson but Leopold Eidlitz who exerted the most profound effect on Schuyler's thinking. A traditionalist with respect to structure, Richardson made his primary contribution to architectural composition in his molding of masses around a forcefully organized plan and his articulation of these masses by materials, apertures, moldings, and ornament. The core of Eidlitz's architectural philosophy, on the other hand, was structure, as the embodiment of architectural expression and as a means of obtaining compositional articulation. Both men derived inspiration from medieval sources. Where, from personal sympathy for the broad masses of early medieval churches, Richardson made free use of French Romanesque prototypes, Eidlitz desired a more structural image in which inspiration from German medieval architecture was somewhat modified by his admiration for the structural lucidity of French Gothic and his delight in Saracenic color. The two architects worked together after 1875 on the New York State Capitol.¹² Much later, in a posthumous tribute to Eidlitz in 1908, Schuyler recorded their mutual esteem. During the course of work on the Capitol, "Richardson exclaimed in his impetuous way, 'I never met a man who had architecture so completely at his fingers' ends.' And again, in a

¹⁰ On McKim's editorship of the *New York Sketch-Book*, see "Charles Follen McKim" (1909-M, p. 381).

¹¹ The publication of the Allegheny County buildings (1884-1886) appears in *Harper's Weekly*, 29 (Feb. 28, 1885), 141f. The anonymous description, seemingly not in Schuyler's style, was primarily concerned with the ventilating and weathering problems of such a building in Pittsburgh's smog.

¹² See below, p. 174n.

still higher flight of enthusiasm, 'Architect or not architect, the ablest man I ever knew.' The senior partner on his side said, 'Richardson has far more copiousness of invention than I.'"¹³ True, Eidlitz's more pedantic imagination required for its undeniable originality the propping of an eclecticism which was at once both rather too literalistic and too bizarre. Hence the crudity and restlessness of his buildings. Yet these qualities never quite obscure the vigorous philosophy which underlay Eidlitz's practice and attracted Schuyler to him.

Schuyler's friendship with Eidlitz began, as he himself tells us, with his very first piece of architectural criticism. He published a critique in the *World* for September 12, 1868, of Eidlitz's newly completed Emanu-El Synagogue on Fifth Avenue. Demolished in 1927 for its successor further uptown, Eidlitz's building was a Saracenic version of Victorian Gothic which, to judge from photographs and Schuyler's testimony, must have possessed a particularly compelling interior (Fig. 24). But its virtues, emphasized in the memorial tribute to Eidlitz forty years later, were so swamped by unfavorable comments in Schuyler's original newspaper notice that the ensuing friendship in itself testifies to the architect's largeness of spirit.¹⁴ In 1896 Schuyler conceded the extent of his indebtedness to Eidlitz. He paralleled his friendship for a man twenty years his senior with Charles James Fox's devotion to Edmund Burke by recalling Fox's statement that "if he were to put into one scale all that he had learned from books and other men, and in the other all that he had learned from [the] conversation and instruction of his right honorable friend he should be at a loss to which to assign the preference." Still later, again in his 1908 memorial to Eidlitz, Schuyler concluded that "his was the clearest and most vigorous mind that in his day and in this country was applied to the practice of architecture."¹⁵ Schuyler's estimate was justified. No American architect of his generation propounded a more thoughtful philosophy of architecture than did Eidlitz, as testified by his neglected *Nature and the Function of Art*, whose labyrinthine argument contained the rudiments of much of Schuyler's critical theory.

Eidlitz's concern for architecture as structure, together with his

¹³ "A Great American Architect: Leopold Eidlitz" (1908-C), p. 187.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 159. On the substance of the review, see below, p. 155n. How much more architectural reviewing Schuyler did for the *World* must await thorough rummaging of its files.

¹⁵ "Cyrus L. W. Eidlitz" (1896-B, p. 413); "Leopold Eidlitz" (1908-C), p. 187.

particular fondness for Gothic as the source of structural ideas, inevitably predisposed Schuyler to the writing of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc. Architect, medieval archeologist, and architectural theorist, Viollet-le-Duc published his synthetic account of architecture as rationalized eclecticism in his famous two-volume *Entretiens sur l'architecture*, the first volume published in 1863, the second in 1872. Although, like Ruskin and Eidlitz, he abhorred Renaissance styles as purely formalistic, Viollet-le-Duc nevertheless found merit in ancient classical (especially Greek, but also the structural aspects of Roman) as well as medieval developments, and he indicated how these architectures of the past, properly understood in terms of structure, environment, and culture, might serve as a liberal basis for modern building. He had originally designed the lectures for delivery before the École des Beaux Arts in Paris, and presented the first on January 29, 1864. The series had to be abandoned after the first few lectures, however, because of hooting students, the precise reasons for their hostility being somewhat difficult to ascertain.¹⁶ Whatever the causes for the fracas, Viollet-le-Duc's ideas were destined to make their way from the printed page rather than the podium. In 1875 the American architect Henry van Brunt translated the first volume of the lectures as *Discourses on Architecture*, which was followed in 1877-1881 by Benjamin Bucknall's standard English translation of both volumes. This architectural classic thereby became a major inspiration for progressive American theory and practice, especially in the seventies and eighties.¹⁷ Thus the *Discourses*

¹⁶ On the surface, philosophical differences accounted for the riot, since the classicistic and formalistic bias of the École was at variance with the medieval and structural bias of Viollet-le-Duc. Probably more important as a source of friction, however, was Viollet-le-Duc's appointment to his post by Napoleon III over the heads of the École administration. Finally, John Jacobus informs us that Viollet-le-Duc's lectures represented more classwork for the students, since this unexpected requirement was added to the existing program. In short, Viollet-le-Duc's appearance was unpopular on all counts. Incidentally, Richardson spent the night in jail after one of the riots, although there is no way of knowing how he felt about Viollet-le-Duc at the time. On Viollet-le-Duc, see Paul Gout, *Viollet-le-Duc; sa vie, son oeuvre, sa doctrine*, supplement 3 of *Revue de l'Art Chrétien* (Paris, 1914); John Summerson, *Heavenly Mansions* (London, 1949), chap. 6; Henry Hope Reed, *The Golden City* (New York, 1959), pp. 121-130, where Viollet-le-Duc is the devil who frustrates Reed's vision of the modern "golden city."

¹⁷ Henry van Brunt (1832-1903), the architect-translator of the first English translation of the first volume of the *Entretiens*, designed Memorial Hall (1871-1874), Harvard University, with his partner William Ware (1832-1915) while under the spell of Viollet-le-Duc. His later work, after he had moved to Kansas City and associated with Frank M. Howe, became increasingly influenced by Beaux Arts esthetics, which his early medieval proclivities barred him from fully comprehending.

profoundly influenced the architects of the Chicago School, Sullivan and Wright among them. When, in fact, John Lloyd Wright asked his father how he should prepare for architecture, Frank Lloyd Wright handed him Viollet-le-Duc, saying, "In these volumes you will find all the architectural schooling you will ever need. What you cannot learn from them, you can learn from me."¹⁸ It would not be too farfetched to imagine Schuyler asking Eidlitz the same question and receiving a similar response, especially since Wright, like Eidlitz, would also have admitted the salutary effect of Ruskin's idealism (with reservations) and Richardson's example.

It was then during the late sixties and especially the seventies that Schuyler's critical position was essentially formulated, although the bulk of his writing during the decade continued to be non-architectural journalism for the *World*. During the eighties, he moved from the *World* to a position on the editorial staff of *The New York Times*, where he remained from 1883 until his retirement from active journalism in 1907. For a short period (1885-1887) he added the aforementioned managing editorship of *Harper's Weekly* to his newspaper duties. Save for an article on the New York State Capitol published in December 1879—his first magazine article on architecture—it was also during the eighties that the earliest of his major essays on architecture appeared as freelance ventures.

There is a hiatus in his architectural writings from around 1883 when he went to *The New York Times* to the beginning of his long association with the *Architectural Record*, which began publication in 1891. Perhaps he was too busy with new editorial duties to freelance at this time, the more so since he simultaneously undertook the editorship of *Harper's Weekly*. Once he had again embarked on architectural criticism, however, this writing virtually amounted to a second career.

Although never a member of its editorial staff, Schuyler was a contributor from the founding of the *Architectural Record*, which gave him a regular outlet for his architectural essays. These continued to appear until his death in 1914, often anonymously, occasionally under the pseudonym of Franz K. Winkler. His writings in the *Record* during those twenty-three years bulk larger than those of any other contributor, except possibly for those of Russell Sturgis, while no one

¹⁸ John Lloyd Wright, *My Father Who Is On Earth* (New York, 1940), p. 69 and chap. 17.

ranged more widely over the field of American building.¹⁹ He wrote articles on contemporary architects, both progressive and academic—his especially lengthy accounts of the work of Richard Morris Hunt, Leopold Eidlitz, C. C. Haight, Adler & Sullivan, Burnham & Root, and Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson indicating something of the catholicity of his investigations. He was an inveterate architectural boulevardier, recording the development of New York City residential building from the early national period to the latest Beaux Arts. In addition to a number of articles on Colonial and early national architecture, and a pioneering series on the Greek Revival, his historical studies include a seemingly interminable series on the architectural genealogy of American universities. He was the first American architectural critic to write extensively on bridges. He returned repeatedly to the skyscraper in its various guises, from the appearance of the first tall buildings in New York around 1870 to the Woolworth Building of 1911–1913, because he believed the skyscraper to be uniquely American and uniquely modern.

Throughout his extensive career as an architectural writer, Schuyler contributed articles on other subjects to various periodicals, while steadily occupied as an editor and literary critic for the *Times*. After 1912, during his retirement, he served as literary critic for the *New York Sun* as well.²⁰ He also wrote one non-architectural book, a short account of the first transcontinental trip of the "Los Angeles Special," entitled *Westward the Course of Empire* (New York, 1906). Inevitably, he became something of a minor literary figure in New York. In the days when the Century Club was a center for social and intellectual life in the city, Schuyler was among the wittier conversationalists at its gatherings, where he counted among his intimate friends the painters Homer Martin and John La Farge, the publisher Henry Holt, the critic and editor William C. Brownell, and many of the architects whose works he reviewed. On his retirement from the *Times* in 1907 Schuyler made his home in New Rochelle, where with his wife he added the cause of civic improvement to his literary and club activities. All in all, his was an intensely active, but outwardly uneventful and urbane life.

¹⁹ His occasional articles on the architecture of other countries are unimportant.

²⁰ Schuyler's late literary reviews for the *Times* and *Sun* are bound and deposited at the National Institute of Arts and Letters in New York. They have no architectural interest.

In fact his way of living was too eclectically journalistic and too circumscribed to make Schuyler quite the architectural critic that he might have become. After the early nineties, when he toured the Midwestern cities for the firsthand impressions which resulted in some of his most important essays, Schuyler lost direct contact with progressive American architecture. Subsequent travel, even when it brought him to the right places (to judge from his articles, to California around 1908 and into the Middle West several times after 1900), never seems to have brought him to the right buildings. Occasionally—as when photographs of Sullivan's bank in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, or the German Wasmuth publications (1910 and 1911) of Frank Lloyd Wright's work came to his attention—news of the most creative aspects of early twentieth-century architecture filtered into Schuyler's polite world, and he was perceptive enough to sense its importance. One feels, however, that he realized only a portion of his talents as an architectural critic. The waste is all the more apparent when one recognizes his prodigious accomplishment in what was, after all, more a hobby than a vocation. At his death on July 16, 1914, Schuyler left an extensive body of architectural criticism, which constitutes the most perceptive, most revealing, and most urbane commentary on American architecture to emerge from the critical tenets of progressive nineteenth-century theory. Only the collected writings of his prolific contemporary, Russell Sturgis, can offer competition. And it is questionable whether Sturgis was quite Schuyler's equal either in profundity of observation or felicity of expression. In a broader sense, Schuyler not only drew from the tradition of organic functionalism which called forth the most creative architecture in nineteenth-century America; but, in the course of his criticism, he helped to define this tradition as well. His contribution thus takes its place beside the formulations of such men as Horatio Greenough, Leopold Eidlitz, and Louis Sullivan. That these three men embodied their theory in three different architectural styles—Greek Revival for Greenough,²¹ Victorian Gothic for Eidlitz, his own

²¹ Theodore M. Brown, a bit ambiguously and uncertainly, provides insights about Greenough's true position, that of a progressive theorist with visual preferences which were old-fashioned when he wrote. See Theodore M. Brown, "Greenough, Paine, Emerson and the Organic Esthetic," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 14 (Mar. 1956), 304-317. Greenough was hostile to the Gothic revival which was the emergent "modern" movement of his day. Compare Greenough's (admittedly vague) visual preferences with the functional, and one can now say protomodern, aspects of the Greek Revival. See Emil Kaufmann, *Architecture in the Age of Reason* (Cambridge, Mass., 1955); Talbot Hamlin, *Greek Revival Architecture in America* (New York, 1944).

protomodern synthesis for Sullivan—indicates the scope and vitality of the architectural idealism embraced by Schuyler.

Within this broad tradition, what precisely was his critical attitude? Schuyler most succinctly enunciated his critical position in a brief talk which he delivered to the National Association of Builders in New York on February 12, 1891. He reprinted his remarks in *American Architecture* as the initial essay, "The Point of View." Somewhat later, he restated his position in a talk at Union College, reprinted in 1894 in the *Record* under the title "Modern Architecture," this time a bit more complexly because he attempted to reconcile his "point of view" with the growing influence of the Beaux Arts esthetic which had already thoroughly saturated the leading American architectural schools.²² These two essays properly stand at the head of any collection of his writings as statements of his critical tenets.

He opened his talk to the builders with a remark by Eidlitz, "It has been said . . . that American architecture was the art of covering one thing with another thing to imitate a third thing, which if genuine would not be desirable." It seemed to him, Schuyler went on, "that the real, radical defect of modern architecture in general, if not of American architecture in particular, is the estrangement between architecture and building,—between the poetry and the prose, so to speak, of the art of building, which can never be disjoined without injury to both." He cited the perfection of those designs which follow "the facts of structure in the features, in the material, in everything." Such buildings "are stimulating and fruitful examples to the architects of the present time to bring their art more into alliance, more into union, more into identity, with the art of building; and it is by these means, gentlemen, and by these means only, that we can ever gain a living, a progressive, a real architecture—the architecture of the future."²³ He later enlarged his plea to contractors in urging Union College undergraduates to abandon the comfortable historicism with which he believed Beaux Arts esthetics was perverting modern architecture. Only by facing the modern world could modern architecture fulfill its promise, and—shades of the future—he juxtaposed the Firth

²² "The Point of View" (1891-A), pp. 95-98, and "Modern Architecture" (1894-D), pp. 99-118. An account of the first of these appears in *The New York Times* (Feb. 13, 1891), p. 2; see below, p. 95n.

²³ "The Point of View" (1891-A), p. 98.

of Forth cantilever bridge (Fig. 14) and a French heavy cruiser to illustrate forms which would never have come into being had engineers pursued the timid course of most architects.

To repeat, Schuyler's vision of a "real architecture" depended on the Ruskinian ethic of morality in architecture, the Richardsonian disciplining of picturesque irregularities into forcefully simple compositions, and, finally, the structural and functional rationalism of Eidlitz and Viollet-le-Duc. This architectural idealism, in turn, prepared Schuyler for his visit to Chicago where he glimpsed firsthand "the architecture of the future."

We may most conveniently begin with the ethical-picturesque position of the nineteenth century pre-eminently associated with Ruskin. Ruskinism fostered an awareness of the "honest" use of materials so as to display their inherent characteristics of color, texture, and function within the fabric of the wall. From Ruskin, too, ultimately stemmed the idealistic concept of a "real" architecture, not only in material terms, but in a social sense as well. Having called for an end to the classicistic formalism which had dominated eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century architecture, Ruskin demanded an architecture sufficiently flexible to grasp the "life" of the men and the world producing it.

Were we to elevate any one of Ruskin's Seven Lamps of Architecture—Sacrifice, Truth, Power, Beauty, Life, Obedience, Memory—as his prime beacon, the Lamp of Life would be the probable choice. The Lamp of Life justifies both eclecticism and hand craftsmanship. To keep the means of architectural expression fluid, Ruskin suggested a late Romanesque and early Gothic vocabulary derived from Florence, Venice, Pisa, and Verona, as well as from English cathedrals in the Early Decorated style. The diversity of this *mélange*, together with the extraordinary individuality of the original buildings, should insure maximum freedom for the "real" architecture of the nineteenth century. Given such freedom of style, the modern world could better express its "life" than within the strait jacket of classicistic formalism. Ruskin would intensify this freedom by eliminating both the sanctioned embellishments of the classical tradition and the mechanical repetitiveness of machine-produced ornament in favor of free hand-craftsmanship. As medieval architecture reveals those slight imperfections which give "life" to the building fabric, so should modern. Moreover,

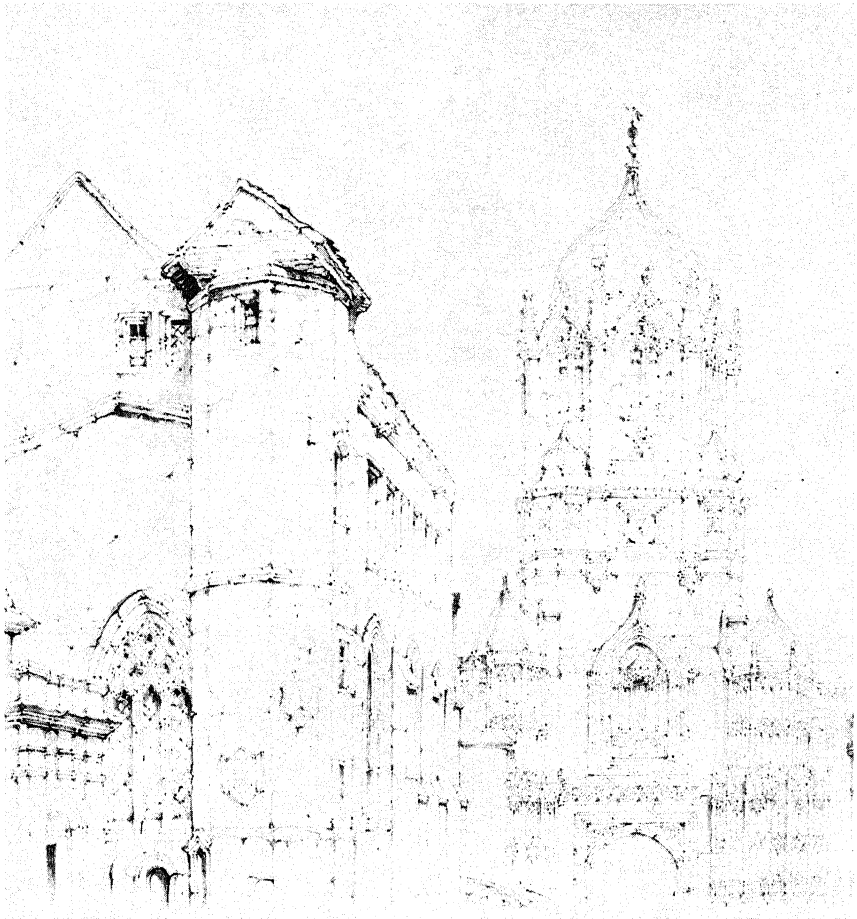


Fig. 4. John Ruskin. "Tom Tower," Christ Church College, Oxford.
Pencil drawing, 1838.

as the medieval craftsman was accorded a degree of freedom to carve or paint what he would, so, Ruskin believed, the modern craftsman should also be able to leave the impress of his "life" on his work. The cooperation of the professional man and the "happy workman," a phrase common to both Ruskin and William Morris, would result in monuments as densely alive in the present as medieval buildings had been in the past. And, finally, as if such eclectic freedoms were insufficient to maximize originality, Ruskin, with his painterly approach

to the wall, favored the uniquely irregular over what was geometrically organized, even to the point where "pleasing decay" exaggerated the irregularity.

Fortunately for Schuyler's critical position, the influence of Ruskin's painterly vision was strongly modified by the architectonic bias of influences from other sources. As a sketcher, rather than a designer, of buildings, Ruskin saw only their walls and their mass. He looked at buildings much as he studied nature and landscape (Fig. 4). The wall was a man-made cliff patched with light and shadow, and crannied with innumerable naturalistic incidents. The mass was an irregular hill or a mountain. Thus Ruskin remained ignorant of structural principles, an innocence which Schuyler did not share. But Ruskin also ignored planning, as though the vast majority of buildings would ever have existed except for the spaces they enclosed. And so, for the most part, did Schuyler, except for his repeated demand that the spatial elements of a complex program be clearly indicated on the exterior.²⁴ Although Schuyler happened to minimize his deficiency in this respect by concentrating on urban buildings, he completely failed to appreciate the importance of the development of American suburban house design between 1870 and 1910. When, for example, he wrote of Wright's work, he simply discussed the massing of the prairie houses, with only casual recognition that the mass depended on a revolutionary conception of interior space.²⁵

Ruskinian esthetics certainly colored Schuyler's criticism; but his indebtedness to Richardson was more specific. Ruskin's vision never

²⁴ See below, p. 26n.

²⁵ Schuyler's only complete articles on suburban houses are "Some Suburbs of New York: I. New Jersey" (1884-A), "Some Suburbs of New York: II. Westchester and Long Island" (1884-C), "Round About Los Angeles" (1908-H), "Study of a New York Suburb, New Rochelle" (1909-D), and most important, "An Architectural Pioneer" (1912-D), on Wright's prairie style, and "Recent American Country Houses" (1912-H), a general introduction to an issue of the *Architectural Record* devoted to suburban houses. He occasionally makes appreciative mention of suburban houses in discussing the careers of certain architects, notably in "The Works of R. H. Robertson" (1896-C, p. 184), "Charles C. Haight" (1899-C, pp. 3f), and in some of his comments on the early Newport houses of Richard Morris Hunt (1895-B). His own house in New Rochelle, a simple shingled cottage in the "bungalow style," appears in "New Rochelle" (1909-D, p. 243, fig. 18) and is identified by Schuyler in the bound copies of his articles in the Avery Library. He entitled the figure "An Average House" with "J. N. S. Quoi" as architect. He describes it as being "not distinctly attractive. But, then, no more is it distinctly repulsive and that is again something to be thankful for."

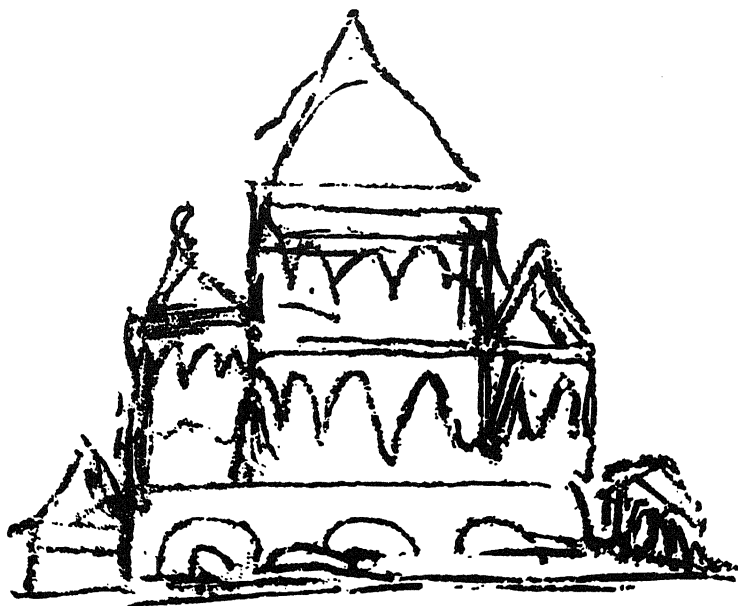
On the significance of suburban domestic developments in late nineteenth-century American architecture, see Scully, *The Shingle Style*.

provided the nineteenth century with monumental equivalents to the medieval prototypes adduced by *The Seven Lamps* and *The Stones of Venice*. The acceptance of a picturesque eclecticism, the inadequate training of professionals, the ignorance of nouveaux riches clients, and the attempt still to achieve the "look" of hand-craftsmanship with mass-production could not but parody Ruskin's sentimental idealism—even if the parody was less ludicrous than Beaux Arts critics later claimed, when they denounced the mid-century as an unrelieved wasteland of "bad taste."

Richardson, however, preserved the freedom implicit in irregular planning and picturesque massing, while disciplining this freedom in terms of large, simple, unified compositions. Schuyler recalled that Richardson aimed for "'Quiet,' as he used to roll it out in his orotund way."²⁶ Certain English architects (especially George Street, Philip Webb, and Norman Shaw), as well as a few Americans like Russell Sturgis, shared Richardson's desire to discipline the picturesque variety which had reached a crescendo in American building of the decade between 1865 and 1875. All of them pointed the way toward greater breadth of mass despite the persistence of some high angularity of silhouette and irregularity of fenestration. A greater master than the others, however, Richardson most compellingly injected the new "quiet" into the old restlessness. By the late seventies he had come to spurn the intricate medieval surfaces which had appealed to Ruskin's pictorial imagination, together with the agitated forms of those who most closely followed Ruskin's example.

In his quest for quiet Richardson embraced the austere boldness of French Romanesque, which in his best works he used more as a compositional ideal than as a quarry for specific motifs. He molded simple, spreading masonry or broad shingled masses around generous interior spaces (Fig 5). The scale of the masses reduced the strident angularities and petty fussiness of his predecessors. He further calmed his silhouettes by opposing their verticality with daring horizontals of grouped windows and bold moldings, thus also announcing on the exterior the spreading spaces within. Schuyler occasionally criticized their bulk. In his opinion the massiveness of the Glessner house in Chicago "ceases to be defensible, except, indeed, in a military sense"

²⁶ "The Buildings of Cincinnati" (1908-A, p. 356).



Richardson

Fig. 5. Henry Hobson Richardson. Preliminary sketch for the massing of the Cathedral of All Saints, Albany, N. Y., 1882-1883.

(Fig. 59).²⁷ He did realize, however, that such exaggeration as he saw here was but an extravagant expression of Richardson's architectonic ordering of pictorial values. To be sure, Schuyler may not have fully appreciated the extent of his friend's achievement until after Richardson's premature death in 1886 at the age of forty-nine. Perhaps only after 1890, when he finally confronted Richardson's Marshall Field Wholesale Store in Chicago and saw around it the severe "business blocks," some of the most notable of which the building had inspired, did Schuyler fully appreciate how picturesque and protomodern ideals of architecture had been joined in Richardson's work.

²⁷ "Glimpses: Chicago" (1891-D), p. 284. Schuyler was a bit unfair, because the interior of the house opens rather extensively around a court. Here as elsewhere, he can be attacked for having concentrated too exclusively on the exterior of the building.

For some reason Schuyler never devoted a full essay to Richardson's achievement, possibly because Mariana Van Rensselaer in 1888 published the lavish memorial account of his career which for half a century remained the standard treatment.²⁸ Of his much more intimate friend Eidlitz, Schuyler did write a series of three memorial articles for the *Record* under the joint title "A Great American Architect: Leopold Eidlitz." These articles remain the most substantial account of a neglected career, and are the more important because virtually all of Eidlitz's important buildings have perished. Arranged by building types, the articles dealt successively with his ecclesiastical and domestic work, his commercial building, and finally his work with Richardson for the State Capitol at Albany.²⁹ They are somewhat diffuse with colorful anecdotes, and the presentation of Eidlitz's career in terms of building types confuses the story of his development. They do, however, give a sense of the gusto, integrity, and intellectual power which Eidlitz brought to his practice, while they also illuminate the milieu in which the American architect worked after the mid-century.

Richardson was a traditionalist with respect to structure; Eidlitz was not. Born in Prague in 1829, Eidlitz doubtless acquired his interest in structure while studying in Vienna to be a land-steward. As a prospective manager of country estates he learned something of the design and construction of simple domestic and farm buildings. It was this part of his program that determined his ultimate vocation. When the twenty-year-old Eidlitz emigrated to the United States in 1843 (the very year of Schuyler's birth, incidentally), he immediately headed for Richard Upjohn's office. There the drawings for Trinity Church in New York had just been completed, while construction was already under way at the western end of Wall Street. Drawn to Upjohn as a leader of the Gothic reaction against Greek Revivalism, Eidlitz never ceased to admire his erstwhile employer. Yet he considered Trinity Church, with its plaster vaults (an economy measure, and not approved by the architect), its dainty surface ornament, and perhaps its retrospective literalism, a mere simulacrum of Gothic, totally

²⁸ Mrs. Schuyler (Mariana Griswold) van Rensselaer, *Henry Hobson Richardson and His Works* (Boston and New York, 1888). It was only superseded by Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *The Architecture of H. H. Richardson and His Times* (New York, 1936).

²⁹ "Leopold Eidlitz" (1908-C), pp. 136-187. See also a helpful study by Allen Brooks, "Leopold Eidlitz (1823-1908)," unpublished Master's thesis, Yale University, May 1955. Brooks does not discuss Eidlitz's *Nature and Function of Art*, which is of most concern here.

lacking the constructive spirit of the original.³⁰ Eidlitz believed in a virile rebirth of Gothic through boldly inventive structure, since all significant architecture emerged from structure, and Gothic architecture was structural building *par excellence*. In this sense, as Schuyler recalled, Eidlitz repeatedly affirmed that "'Gothic is adequate to every expression.' " In this sense, too, Eidlitz was (like Ruskin, but for different reasons) violently anti-classical. Schuyler recalled an instance when a fellow architect chided Eidlitz for his adamant Gothicism, saying that he did not believe that Eidlitz could so much as "design" a Corinthian capital. Schuyler was driven to typographical extremes to indicate the explosive nature of Eidlitz's one-word reply. "DESIGN!" he snorted. To him, the very word had been misused in reference to the classical orders. Speaking to Richardson, Eidlitz once contrasted classical and Gothic architecture: "In the former you had a building with architecture adjoined to it, 'in true Gothic, so long as you find two stones together, you find architecture.' " ³¹

This is not the place to review Eidlitz's building career. Insofar as it can be done at all, one has to go back to Schuyler's articles and the indistinct half-tones strewn through them. The over-all impression is of gawky buildings, never free of the spotty detail and thin verticality of run-of-the-mill Victorian Gothic. Yet Eidlitz's buildings are almost invariably interesting in their inventive and straightforward use of materials, their polychromy, and structural expression. One thinks perhaps of Frank Furness in the fearlessness with which Eidlitz approached design, although Eidlitz's more prosaic imagination shows neither Furness' daring in eclectic juxtaposition nor his fantastic inventiveness. In theory at least, if not always in practice, Eidlitz believed that the architect should stay with the forms of the particular style he employed. Temperamentally, moreover, his rationalism checked his fantasy, so that his buildings often have a pedantic air, as though they must teach as well as please us. "Reason was to him the guide of life, the guide of art. He knew no other." ³² The demonstration was apt to become too emphatic. Thus the polychromy of one of his New York churches, Holy Trinity (1853), earned it the popular sobriquet of the Church of the Homely Oilcloth; but photographs

³⁰ "Leopold Eidlitz" (1908-C), pp. 139f, 145.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 142f.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 161.

make us wish at least that the "Saracenic" splendor of the interior of the old Temple Emanu-El (1866-1868) or the Golden Corridor (1878) in the New York State Capitol still existed to confirm Schuyler's praise of them (Figs. 20, 24). Almost all of Eidlitz's buildings reveal some structural details of interest. His use of wood is especially impressive, whether in roof supports over large spaces or in recollection of chalet construction for his houses. His wooden structure intensifies the tall, open, angular spaces of his church and auditorium interiors, echoing similar qualities of the German *Hallenkirche*, while the bold bracketing of his balconies sometimes further emphasized their boxy openness. Although budgets rarely permitted the luxury, Eidlitz, like most Victorian Goths, would have preferred stone vaulting to wooden construction for his public spaces. One such opportunity came his way with the commission for the Assembly Chamber of the New York State Capitol, the most impressive example of Eidlitz's building still extant. Unhappily for his reputation as a structuralist, his vaulting exhibited signs of failure shortly after its completion. It was removed and a flat coffered ceiling of wood and papier maché substituted in its stead below the level from which the vaulting had sprung. Deprived of its crown and, as a result, of its vertiginous altitude, the truncated room is still impressive. But in Schuyler's judgment, the original was "perhaps the noblest monument of the Gothic revival in America."³³

Although Eidlitz's buildings have largely disappeared, fortunately his ideas on architecture persist in his forgotten *Nature and the Function of Art with Special Reference to Architecture*, published in New York and London in 1881. The book of nearly five hundred pages is as ponderous as its title suggests, so rambling, repetitious, and awkwardly phrased that even Schuyler's literary advice was unable to pull it together.³⁴ With all its faults, however, its argument is vigorous. Buried within its too cosmic sweep is the fullest statement of the functional-organic view of architecture, based on a medieval-inspired approach to structure and composition, produced by any nineteenth-century American. Eidlitz's thinking parallels Ecclesiological and Ruskinian programs for architectural "reality" through the "honest" use of materials and

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 175. On the faulty structure of the Assembly Chamber and the necessity for its false ceiling, see below, p. 174n. The ceiling covered murals painted at vault level by William Morris Hunt; see below, p. 178.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

structure on one hand, and on the other, Viollet-le-Duc's more professional structural rationalism. Yet Eidlitz seems to have developed his ideas independently. "Reality" never appears in his book (although Schuyler often uses the word), while Viollet-le-Duc is mentioned only once, in an incidental manner. In fact, Eidlitz had been pondering his architectural philosophy since the fifties at least. Articles in the short-lived *Crayon*, which regularly reported meetings of the infant American Institute of Architects from the year of its founding in 1857, indicate that Eidlitz was one of the most articulate members of the New York chapter, already exploring ideas that received their definitive publication a quarter of a century later.³⁵ The scope of his ideas, if not their coherence, brought him an invitation to present a paper to the Royal Institute of British Architects and in 1897 election as an Honorary Corresponding Member.³⁶ The comprehensiveness of *Nature and Function of Art* and the importance of its ideas to Schuyler's thinking warrant some, though necessarily inadequate, attention to its contents.

Eidlitz opened his work by attacking the authorities for many of what he regarded as the widespread misconceptions about architecture common to his day. Although he appreciated Ruskin's enthusiasm for architecture, he of course attacked the opening premise of *The Seven Lamps*, that "architecture" can be differentiated from mere "building" (in which pejorative category Ruskin had placed "a wasp's nest, a rat hole, or a railway station") by the presence of "something added." Since Eidlitz was contemptuous of any conception of architecture as merely applied embellishment or the abstract manipulation of form

³⁵ *Crayon*, 5 (Feb. 1858), 53-55; 5 (Mar. 1858), 109-111; 5 (Apr. 1858), 139-142; 6 (Jan. 1859), 20-24; 6 (May 1859), 150f; and in a continued article outside the reports of the AIA meetings, 8 (Apr. 1861), 89-91; 8 (May 1861), 111-113, which was to have been further continued had the *Crayon* not folded with its July 1861 issue. Eidlitz's single mention of Viollet-le-Duc in *Nature and Function of Art* occurs on p. 79: "The students of the École des Beaux Arts felt that Renaissance architecture was true, and they mobbed Viollet-le-Duc because he doubted it."

³⁶ "Educational Training of Architects," *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, n.s. 3, 4 (Mar. 4, 1897), 213-222. Eidlitz's paper stirred up much hostile comment from the Beaux-Arts-inclined audience, to which he replied sarcastically in the *Journal* (Sept. 23, 1897), pp. 462-468, while only disclaimers by some of his critics finally terminated the debate, *Journal* (Oct. 14, 1897), pp. 484-487. Professor George Aitchison, Jr., Eidlitz's sponsor in the RIBA and an occasional contributor of articles on Byzantine architecture to the *Architectural Record*, defended Eidlitz's ideas. As late as 1900, Aitchison praised Eidlitz's book. In a paper on "Aesthetic Invention," he remarked in part, "The American architect Leopold Eidlitz was the first writer that I know who affirmed that aesthetic invention in architecture was still possible. . . . His book . . . is the only book I know that treats the subject philosophically and analytically." Reported in *American Architect and Building News*, 47 (Mar. 24, 1900), 95.

for its own sake, he also criticized all formalists who maintained that architecture does not refer to structure or use, but merely to beautiful form independent of practical consideration.³⁷ Gothicism though he was, Eidlitz opposed fellow medievalists as staunchly as he did classicists whenever he felt that their Gothicism represented the indiscriminate imitation of past forms without their substance. Thus he not only criticized Upjohn's Trinity Church, but also the opinions of the most successful British Gothicism of the mid-nineteenth century, Sir Gilbert Scott, whose *Remarks on Secular and Domestic Architecture* of 1857, in Eidlitz's opinion, too readily praised any building with a medieval veneer.³⁸

Behind these specific attacks on a hodgepodge of some of the reputable authorities of his day lay Eidlitz's scorn of "taste" as a basis for architecture or any other art. Yet it was "good taste" that the schools pretended to give the architectural student, and it was the further compromising of this "good taste" by the fashionable taste of clients which destroyed architecture as serious expression, to leave it at the mercy of the chic whim of the moment. While attacking the schools for their emphasis on "taste," he also assaulted the concomitant notion that good taste provided a repertoire of forms from which "inspiration" or flaccid "invention" by happy juggling extracted architecture. Rather than teaching such tricks, he said, the schools should lay the basis for a sound architectural philosophy by working from structure and function so as to establish a basis in "reason" and "law" for serious endeavor.³⁹ If Eidlitz himself may have been somewhat too rationalistic in his approach to architecture, as he tacitly admitted in confessing Richardson's superior "copiousness of invention," then he surely erred on the right side,⁴⁰ and Schuyler emphatically concurred in his friend's prejudices.

Their statement cleared the ground for the exposition of Eidlitz's convictions. Briefly, he believed that structure should be visible, while

³⁷ On Ruskin, see *Nature and Function of Art*, pp. 36f, 51f, 63f; on other authorities whom Eidlitz attacks, see especially pp. 50-65. Since Eidlitz is repetitious, these and other page references to his book are representative rather than inclusive.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 67f.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 40-50, 200f, 357, 385f, 399f. Schuyler suggested that Eidlitz may have been a little too rational in "Leopold Eidlitz" (1908-C), p. 185, although Eidlitz was not blindly rationalistic.

⁴⁰ See above, p. 10n.

mass should be compartmentalized in a hierarchy of space-enclosing shapes progressively assembled as "single cells, groups and piles." All subordinate modeling of the mass in light and shade, as well as all ornament, should be designed so as to make the structure, the materials, and the function evident. The architect began by considering the cells (or rooms) required, their magnitude, and disposition. Where plan was almost instantly translated into a highly articulated mass, the mass reflected the "actions," both functional and symbolic, housed by the building. This direct revelation of the plan by the mass may have encouraged Schuyler's critical neglect of plan and interior space, except for occasional observations on auditoria or large public spaces where these were obviously so prominent as to require notice. Ideally, for him as for Eidlitz, to stand outside was to see inside. He largely ignored (much more than Eidlitz) such problems as communication in planning, progressions in the shape and scale of rooms, the manipulation of interior light, and the possibility of a degree of calculated surprise between mass and plan.⁴¹

Eidlitz went on to attempt a theoretical justification of what he termed the fully "modeled" building. Unhappily, where he wrote with clarity and vigor on the practical problems of building, his style became turgid and his logic confused when he ventured into the speculative reaches of esthetics. Beneath its superficial incoherence, however, *Nature and Function of Art* disclosed a remarkable intelligence. To Eidlitz, only the fully modeled building could embody an architectural "idea." "Idea," in turn, he defined as any conception which taps the intellect and emotion so as to create significant human experience. Since he held the naive, but then prevalent, belief that painting

⁴¹ Eidlitz, *Nature and Function of Art*, pp. 261-273; also 301-304, 337, 405. On Schuyler's discussion of large interior spaces, see especially his comments on Richardson's interior for All Saints (1892-A), pp. 236f, 243f, Eidlitz's Assembly Chamber for the New York Capitol (1908-C), p. 177, and Sullivan's interior for the People's Savings Bank in Cedar Rapids, Iowa (1912-A), pp. 628-633. Except possibly for the last, Schuyler wrote of these spaces in general terms, without intensive analysis. Of Wright's space, for example, Schuyler says almost nothing in "An Architectural Pioneer" (1912-D). On this and other grounds, Barr Ferree criticized Schuyler's *American Architecture*. In his editorial column "Architecture" for the *Engineering Magazine*, 3 (May 1892), 262-267, he stated, in part (p. 266), "In his introductory chapter the author deplores the estrangement between architecture and building which has become so marked a characteristic of modern work that if the fronts of most of our structures are scraped off the architecture has been wholly removed. Yet the critic who is wise enough to make this comment on the works of others falls into the same error himself by totally neglecting interiors and plans, while such practical subjects as construction and building methods do not seem to concern him at all."

and sculpture *illustrated* literary ideas, he was forced to thread his way through much needless argument before reaching the sound, and for its time extraordinary, conclusion that "The observed relation of matter is an idea." Of all the arts, he maintained that architecture consummately expressed "ideas" through the distribution of matter in what he termed "ideal" (as opposed to illustrative) forms. This distribution of matter, in turn, affected the human psyche when the architectural "idea" could be experienced as kinesthetic and organic analogy. Both analogies conditioned Schuyler's "point of view."

In his knotty style Eidlitz summarized his kinesthetic theme: "Thus we may say of the ideal forms of architecture, that they perform acts illustrative of an idea, which acts are a condition of muscular and nerve motion, or a tendency to the same, which is, in all cases, an equivalent to an actual motion arrested." The architect effected this empathetic transmutation of the architectural experience into muscular and nervous responses primarily through structure. "Architecture is the fine art by which ideas are expressed in a structure. . . ." ⁴² But the compartmentalization of the building so as to make visible the "actions" it contained also contributed to the kinesthetic experience. The kinesthetic approach to architecture appeared in Schuyler's criticism as a minor, but important, theme, especially in his sensitivity to the esthetics of bridge design.

In both Eidlitz's book and especially in Schuyler's criticism, however, a conception of the organic tended to subsume the kinesthetic theme. When an architect generated his architectural "idea" in terms of molded mass, and modeled parts as these revealed material, structure, and function, he worked in a manner analogous to that of Nature.

Nature never essays to compose forms, she acts upon a much broader and simpler law, which governs all matter. Matter moves, accumulates, and distributes itself, and in so doing facilitates or retards relations of matter of all kinds. Every relation of matter has a certain stability, which, in highly organized matter, becomes perceptible in the shape of energy of function. This energy of function is expressed in nature in visible form. As art is re-creation, and the forms of architecture are entirely ideal, the problem to be solved may be stated thus: We know the methods by which nature arrives at her forms; shall the architect presume to create his forms at once full-fledged, complete, as it were, in their final shape; or, in other

⁴² For Eidlitz's comments on the structural "idea" and its kinesthetic implications, see *Nature and Function of Art*, pp. 222, 228, 288, also 122-134, 213, 250f, 372, 394, 400, 418.

words, shall he attempt to tell a story before he has analyzed the facts to be related? Can this be done? No; what he must do is to study the conditions, analyze the environment, yield to it everywhere, respond to it always, until the functions resulting from all this are fully expressed in the organism; and while he is thinking of all this, forms will grow under his hands, forms which will often surprise him by their novelty, by their force of expression (beauty) and then again perhaps by their simplicity, which in connection with other structural parts of a more complicated and a more expressive nature serves as a foil to enhance the value of the whole.

Such an organic process of creation, transcending "taste" or superficial "invention," resulted in "objective beauty."⁴³ Eidlitz's "objective beauty" became Schuyler's "thing itself."⁴⁴ The somewhat more austere implications of Schuyler's Kantian phrase compared to Eidlitz's suggests the drift in progressive architectural theory and practice from the seventies onward toward the "new objectivity" of European modernism in the twenties.

With his nineteenth-century background, an "objective beauty" wholly apart from the styles of the past was impossible for Eidlitz, and the extreme articulation which he desired inevitably predisposed him to medieval architecture. Like Viollet-le-Duc, however, and like Schuyler, who learned from both, Eidlitz also admitted the excellence of the Greek temple for its kinesthetic and organic revelation of structure. At least he admired the porticoes and colonnades for these qualities, although he considered that the cella had always remained undeveloped. The relatively unicellular nature of the temple, its lack of windows, and the bulk of its members, all made it unavailable for modern building. As for Imperial Roman vaulted buildings, which a structuralist might have been expected to admire (and Viollet-le-Duc did admire them precisely for this reason), Eidlitz was so offended by the pictorial quality of the applied ornamentation overlaying the vaulting that he could not, or would not, see the daring engineering beneath the decorative veneer. And of course where Roman architecture was bad, Renaissance was worse. In general, Schuyler concurred. After Beaux Arts neoclassicism had become omnipresent and

⁴³ *Nature and Function of Art*, pp. 358, 186f. On Eidlitz's organicism, see especially pp. 57, 122f, 167, 170, 399f.

⁴⁴ Schuyler uses this phrase repeatedly: see (1894-D), p. 113; (1896-A), p. 415; (1899-A), p. 438; (1902-D, p. 416); (1905-C, p. 252); (1907-E, p. 166). Alternatively, such phrases as "facts of the case," "conditions of the problem," "force of necessity," and the like convey the same meaning.

Schuyler was forced to write about it, he sought out for special praise those examples which he somewhat inaccurately held to be "Néo-Grec." Even these offered limited scope for most modern problems. If there was to be any hope for the future in Beaux Arts esthetics, Schuyler inclined (somewhat confusedly to be sure) to the belief that it must come from such variant examples of twentieth-century Beaux Arts Gothic as Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson's St. Thomas' Church or Cass Gilbert's Woolworth Building.⁴⁵

In thus favoring medieval over classical forms, Schuyler's prejudices of course paralleled those of his mentor. To Eidlitz, Gothic represented the "most perfect system known to art" in that it was the most thoroughly articulated with respect to structure and compartmented with respect to function. But there was Gothic and Gothic. "If," wrote Eidlitz, "we come to the wholesome conclusion that all organic masses *must* be modeled *how much* they should be modeled deserves consideration."⁴⁶ Now it is precisely this question with which developments in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century architecture confronted Schuyler. The problem came to focus in the skyscraper, which accounted in large measure for Schuyler's persistent concern with this new American building type. In the first place, the multi-storied bureaucratic structure on a handkerchief-sized site tended to make nonsense of the idea of a modeled mass. In the second place, the linearism of the metal frame tended to eliminate the sculptural nature of components appropriate to traditional modes of construction. How could a kinesthetic and organic theory of architecture primarily derived from nineteenth-century neomedievalism adjust itself to conditions which seemed to demand an esthetic of spindly uniformity? Fortunately for Eidlitz's convictions, his *Nature and Function of Art* appeared just before the developments in the mid-eighties that led to the skeletal-framed skyscraper substantially challenged, if not his premises, at least the visual images on which his premises depended. True, cast-iron buildings had foretold some of the problems to come, but by the early eighties this type of construction was substantially discredited. Some, like Ruskin, continued to be antagonized by cast iron on esthetic grounds, since the mass-production of the elements too readily provided for mere display, thus snuffing both the Lamps

⁴⁵ See below, pp. 83f.

⁴⁶ *Nature and Function of Art*, p. 46.

of Truth and of Life. Even when forthrightly employed, iron seemed too insubstantial for architecture—more a cage than a building. Thus Ruskin himself could not deny the “honesty” of Sir Joseph Paxton’s Crystal Palace for the London Exposition of 1851. He merely denied that the monster greenhouse was “architecture,” thereby condemning it to the company of wasps’ nests, rat holes, and railroad stations.⁴⁷ This opposition to iron architecture on the grounds both of esthetic piety and of esthetic snobbery was immensely strengthened by public recognition that a material, advertised in America as fire-proof when it was first popularized, turned ductile and collapsed in the substantial conflagrations for which nineteenth-century cities were famous. By the early seventies such catastrophes as the Boston and Chicago fires had so thoroughly discredited exposed cast and wrought iron that even the impious and unprejudiced lost faith in metal architecture. Not until the improvement of terra-cotta sheathing during the eighties did metal skeletal structure, thus protected, finally triumph. Writing when he did, and hostile as he was to cast iron on both esthetic and practical grounds (save for its use as interior supports), Eidlitz could ignore a problem which Schuyler had to face.⁴⁸ Yet even neo-

⁴⁷ See especially Ruskin’s pamphlet, *The Opening of the Crystal Palace Considered in Some of Its Relations to the Prospects of Art* (London, 1854), in E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, *The Works of John Ruskin* (London, 1904) 12, 417–432; also 9, 455f. The pamphlet was really a plea for the preservation of old buildings.

⁴⁸ *Nature and Function of Art*, pp. 314f. Eidlitz’s one exception to his condemnation of iron was its use in interior post-and-beam construction, doubtless because he realized that such construction was essential for commercial buildings. He also seems to have preferred a clearly compartmented space on esthetic grounds. Witness his Assembly Chamber, Senate Corridor, and Golden Corridor for the New York Capitol, his courtroom for the New York Courthouse, and his banking room for the Dry Dock Savings Bank, all of which display medieval bay systems. Considering the bold manner in which he avoided such compartmentalization in certain of his spaces—in some of his churches, like St. George’s in New York, where it was unnecessary, and in the auditorium of the Academy of Music in Brooklyn—it is curious that he opposed wide span construction in metal, except for industrial uses. Such construction was “not conducive to art expression in a church, a theater, or a legislative chamber” where “massiveness is a visible guarantee of stability.” An architecture in which space dominated the mass disturbed him. Although his criticism in this respect is essentially conservative, it might well be applied to the present exaggerated interest in wide spans whether required or not. “A congregation of men and women spread equally like plaster over indefinite space is not a picture at all; it has neither foreground, middle-ground, nor background. The dignity of the possible man or woman, brought out in bold relief in a foreground limited by some structural feature, is lost in a sea of bonnets and hats, or of chignons, and of closely-cropped craniums. The individual man is nowhere to be found; there is no index of what the mass before us is composed of. A structure with emptiness as its chief excellence cannot, by any human contrivance be made to express an idea in matter. The modern railroad station is a striking example.” Eidlitz went on to praise Paxton for

medieval masonry buildings posed the problem of *how much* modeling. Should buildings be massive like Romanesque structures? Alternatively, should they be attenuated like Late Gothic? Eidlitz wanted neither extreme, while his conclusions strikingly paralleled what would become a central theme of Schuyler's.

Eidlitz maintained that Romanesque was too crude and Late Gothic too emaciated. Early and High Gothic represented the ideal mean for the modeled building. To Eidlitz, the disastrous turning point in the history of architecture had occurred when Renaissance architects turned for inspiration to classical prototypes rather than to Early and High Gothic examples. They rightly rebelled against the attenuations and lacy elaboration of Late Gothic, which Eidlitz (and Ruskin also) considered too refined for architectural expression. In the Renaissance quest for a more material, less transcendental expression, Quattrocento architects returned to the imperfectly modeled architecture of the classical world. Had the Renaissance architect acted reasonably instead of emotionally, in accord with logic rather than taste, he would have perceived that Late Gothic was not the whole of Gothic. Early and High Gothic could have provided the tangibility which the Renaissance craved and, as the "most perfect system known to art," in the sense of its superior articulation, could clearly have offered greater creative potential than classical forms. Had the Renaissance architect used history correctly, searching for the most fertile "laws" it could teach rather than the "forms" it could give, he would surely have built upon Early and High Gothic. Then modern architecture would never have lost the organic functional tradition from which all significant architecture derives, and to which serious architects must return.⁴⁹ So ran Eidlitz's historical parable with its curious mixture of profundity and naïveté. And now translate the parable into late nineteenth-

not attempting extraordinary spans in his Crystal Palace. Allen Brooks has brought to our attention a project in Avery Library, Columbia University, for a glass structure modeled on the Crystal Palace for the New York Exposition of 1853, which Talbot Hamlin attributed to Eidlitz. The design is stepped like the Crystal Palace, but contains metal proplike buttresses on the exterior. If the design is Eidlitz's, it does not violate his esthetic of solidity for everyday building, since transparent fantasy was perfectly acceptable for a fair, as even Ruskin admitted. Interestingly too, in one of the early meetings of the American Institute of Architects, Henry van Brunt and Eidlitz debated the validity of metal as a dominant architectural material, with Eidlitz taking the lithic position: *Crayon*, 6 (Jan. 1859), 20-24. For Eidlitz's position on extensively windowed office buildings, see below, p. 67.

⁴⁹ On Eidlitz's historical argument, see *Nature and Function of Art*, pp. 338-351 *passim* and 417f.

and early twentieth-century terms. For Early and High Gothic read "Victorian Gothic"; for Romanesque, substitute "Richardsonian Romanesque"; replace Late Gothic with "skeletal metal construction"; for Renaissance, read "Beaux Arts"; then we are able to see how strikingly Eidlitz's version of history parallels Schuyler's criticism.

Eidlitz's convictions recall Viollet-le-Duc's. Both held that architectural imagination depends upon "reason" rather than taste, fashion, or happy inspiration. Both maintained that this reasoned approach to architecture stemmed from a functional and structural view of present problems considered in the light of "laws" or "methods" derived from past building and natural analogy. Although both men were architectural rationalists, it cannot be too strongly emphasized that neither held a narrowly materialistic and deterministic position. Neither maintained that architecture automatically emerged from structural and functional analyses. For both, such analyses informed "reason." Reason, in turn, kindled the "imagination" or "intuition," while only this higher, and ultimately mysterious, faculty could produce an architectural "idea."⁵⁰ The differences in their books are differences of emphasis rather than of ideals. The *Discourses* is by far the more cosmopolitan work, possessing an ease of grasp and clarity of expression remote from the earnest wrestling and provincial scholarship of Eidlitz's pages. Whereas Eidlitz was narrowly partisan to Gothic (despite grudging praise for the Greek temple), Viollet-le-Duc did not let his partiality for medieval styles blind him to contributions made by Greek, Roman, and even early Renaissance building, so long as the nascent Renaissance was touched (especially in French chateaux) by the twilight of medieval forms. Hence Viollet-le-Duc's historicism was far more profound than Eidlitz's. For example, he was much more insistent than Eidlitz on the Taine-inspired role of race, people, nation, and/or culture (the categories blur in characteristic nineteenth-century fashion) in conditioning preferences with respect to structure and function as well as form. Thus Viollet-le-Duc often illustrated the process of architectural rationalism by developmental analysis, where the evolution of forms from primitive to more sophisticated stages depended on a nexus of rationally determined structural and functional

⁵⁰ For "idea," Eidlitz and Viollet-le-Duc variously use "style," "principle," "principle of order," and "dominant idea."

considerations, plus somewhat extrarational cultural biases.⁵¹ If Viollet-le-Duc's argument was thereby sometimes clouded by the mystique of culture, his cultural analysis also gave greater subtlety and breadth to his rationalism than Eidlitz's possessed.

The comparative and historical aspects of Viollet-le-Duc's theory may have accounted for Eidlitz's unexplained reservation that, however admirable the *Discourses*, their speculation was "too timid."⁵² In any event, where historicism dominates Viollet-le-Duc's thinking compared to Eidlitz's, the balance tips the other way with what may be called "organicism." Although the *Discourses* are sprinkled throughout with organic analogy, organicism—at least in the literal sense of Nature as commonly experienced rather than the more abstract conception of an underlying cosmic order—never occupied the central position in progressive theory on the Continent during the nineteenth century that it assumed in the Anglo-American world.

Since Schuyler's concentration on the American architecture in his own century did not provide themes with the requisite sweep for comparative or evolutionary historicism, the *Discourses* hardly extended, but merely confirmed, what he had learned from Eidlitz, with two important exceptions. First, Schuyler partially embraced Viollet-le-Duc's more catholic view of the virtues of past styles other than Gothic. Then, Schuyler also followed Viollet-le-Duc in his interest in metal structure, as indeed any intelligent critic at the end of the century would have had to do. Viollet-le-Duc closed his *Discourses* with a plea for a modern architecture based on a combination of exposed metal and stone. His ferro-lithic neomedievalism was fantastically ugly in its straddle of novel metal structure with eclectic masonry recall, but (Eidlitz's comments notwithstanding) it had considerable boldness too. Like many other theorists, Viollet-le-Duc was at best a mediocre designer who would have bettered his cause, in Schuyler's opinion, had he not illustrated his theory by his designs.⁵³ But despite the gross

⁵¹ Of all the progressive American critics of the period, Barr Ferree seems to have been the most influenced by evolutionary historicism. He, like Viollet-le-Duc, was interested in primitive architecture and used some of the anthropological theory of his day in his criticism. On this aspect of Viollet-le-Duc's work, see especially *Histoire de l'habitation humaine* (Paris, 1875), trans. by Benjamin Bucknall as *Habitations of Man in All Ages* (Boston, 1876).

⁵² "Leopold Eidlitz" (1908-C), p. 161.

⁵³ "The Work of Barney & Chapman" (1904-D), pp. 131, 134. For Viollet-le-Duc's ferro-lithic designs, see *Discourses*, 2, lectures 12, 13, and 18; discussed by Summerson, *Heavenly Mansions*, chap. 6.

crudity of these projects, Viollet-le-Duc offered more talented designers a real challenge. More than any contemporary theorist, he anticipated ideas and values fully articulated only in the twentieth century.

These then were the principal sources of Schuyler's point of view. There was Ruskin's painterly approach to picturesque massing and frank exploitation of materials for properties inherent in them, together with the discipline offered by the architectural breadth of Richardson's composition. There was the structural, functional, and organic bias of Eidlitz and Viollet-le-Duc. Underlying this cluster of ideas, there was the desire that architecture should possess a "reality" or "objective beauty" transcending fashion, formalism, and eclecticism, that modern buildings be "ideas" resonant with the life which produced them.

To what extent could a static point of view, based upon values implicit in the progressive architectural ideals of the sixties and seventies, measure production for thirty-five years after its formulation?

Following the career of a prolific journalist-critic and making sense of it is not easy. A blindly chronological approach becomes disjointed and, because of the lack of any development in Schuyler's esthetic, in his case is irrelevant as well. Moreover, the chronological survey must include much that is politely half-hearted, trivial, and (especially with a critic possessing Schuyler's elaborate nineteenth-century style and leisurely armchair manner) sometimes prolix to boot. It seems best, therefore, to organize the most significant segments of Schuyler's voluminous writing around certain themes central to his criticism. It seems equally advisable to arrange his criticism so that it serves as a commentary on the historical development of American architecture between 1850 and 1915.

Hence the particular organization of these volumes, in which is included a considerable selection from his critical essays, as well as the whole of his book, *American Architecture*, under the following part titles: The Point of View; The Heritage of Victorian Gothic; The Richardsonian Interlude; Bridges—Rationalistic Engineering; Skyscrapers—Rationalistic Architecture; the Academic Reaction; Late Sullivan and Early Wright. The historical arrangement seems the more appropriate since, according to Montgomery Schuyler's son, Robert Livingston Schuyler, one of his father's dearest ambitions was that of utilizing his

criticism, together with his historical pieces on Colonial and Greek Revival architecture, as the basis for a general history of American architecture.

If the foundations of Schuyler's architectural ideals had their origin in the sixties and seventies, when picturesque eclecticism had reached the culmination of its variety and violence, his major critical writing did not begin until the eighties. Hence most of what he wrote about the earlier decades was retrospective commentary. There are articles which consider the impact of a movement, such as "The Romanesque Revival in New York" in the first issue of the *Architectural Record* in 1891. More frequently, there are articles on architects now largely forgotten who cut something of a professional figure at the end of the nineteenth century, but whose careers began shortly after the Civil War. Most of these, like Francis H. Kimball, J. C. Cady (of Cady, Berg & See), R. H. Robertson, and Cyrus L. W. Eidlitz (son of Leopold), had begun with Victorian Gothic or Richardsonian Romanesque and by the time of Schuyler's critiques had drifted into a partial acceptance of Beaux Arts classicism limited by the medieval proclivities of their formative years. Unconsciously ironical, most of these critiques trail off toward the end, just where they should register a climax. Obviously Schuyler was most interested in their early picturesque work—and rightly so. In the course of discussing this early work he generalized on the esthetic milieu which accounted for it.

American Victorian Gothic, which he dated between the World's Fair held in New York in 1853 and the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia of 1876, seemed of "rather baleful import now [1897], so many restless, disjointed and crudely colored edifices have been committed in its name."⁵⁴ The failure of the movement stemmed from too literal a use of medieval motifs and from the "half-education" of so many of the architects whose license knew no bounds amidst such freedom. But the expression of arrangement, material, and construction at the core of this esthetic would always be valid. In 1908 Schuyler judged in retrospect that Victorian Gothic, for all its weaknesses, during its quarter-century reign included "about the most interesting examples in the United States of free and rational architecture, of the architecture of fact and reality, of the architecture of the future if

⁵⁴ "The Works of Cady, Berg and See" (1897-C), p. 125.

architecture with us is to have a future.”⁵⁵ It was the architecture of good hope, never fully realized. In this spirit Schuyler looked back, also in 1908, on architecture then passé, like Wight’s National Academy and Brooklyn Mercantile Library, Cady’s Brooklyn Academy of Design, Haight’s campuses for Columbia and the General Theological Seminary, and Potter’s complex for the Union Theological Seminary, as well as certain of Eidlitz’s buildings (Figs. 3, 6, 7, 15, 16, 126). If only the “truths” crudely embodied in these buildings and memorialized in Eidlitz’s *Nature and Function of Art* “had been apprehended clearly enough and by practitioners numerous enough,” he wrote a little earlier, in 1898, “there would by now be no longer a question of ‘style’ but architects would be doing architecture.”⁵⁶

Schuyler correctly realized that however copious Victorian Gothic may have been in its potential—too copious, as it turned out, for assimilation—no architect working in the style ever achieved the commanding synthesis that Richardson effected in his personal vision of French Romanesque. Although Schuyler repeatedly evoked Richardson’s memory, no extended evaluation of his achievement appeared until in the nineties Schuyler printed five essays, written when the Richardsonian interlude was all but over. The first two were “The Romanesque Revival in New York” and “The Romanesque Revival in America”; the third was “An American Cathedral,” which discussed Richardson’s projected, but unbuilt, All Saints Episcopal Cathedral for Albany, New York; the fourth and fifth were portions of his two-part “Glimpses of Western Architecture” where Schuyler discussed Richardson’s influence on the Midwest around 1890, using as case studies Chicago and the Twin Cities.⁵⁷

Of course Richardson confronts any critic, especially a nineteenth-century critic, with the Janus-faced problem of his “Romanesque” eclecticism on the one side and his protomodernity on the other. Schuyler clearly sensed that the Romanesque trappings of Richardson’s work were merely the means toward a serious architectural end—demonstrating the affinity of the task at hand for a usable past. With his medieval predilections, his traditionalist feeling for rugged yet

⁵⁵ “Leopold Eidlitz” (1908-C), pp. 174f. See pp. 7n, 126n, 128n, and 160n.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 160; “The Works of Francis H. Kimball” (1898-A), p. 122.

⁵⁷ See (1891-C), pp. 191-199; (1891-F), pp. 200-225; “American Cathedral” (1892-A), pp. 229-245; (1891-D), pp. 246-291; (1891-E), pp. 292-328. The explanation for the exceptional designation of “An American Cathedral” appears in the Bibliography.



Fig. 6. Charles C. Haight. Reading room of the old Library of Columbia University, New York City, completed 1884.

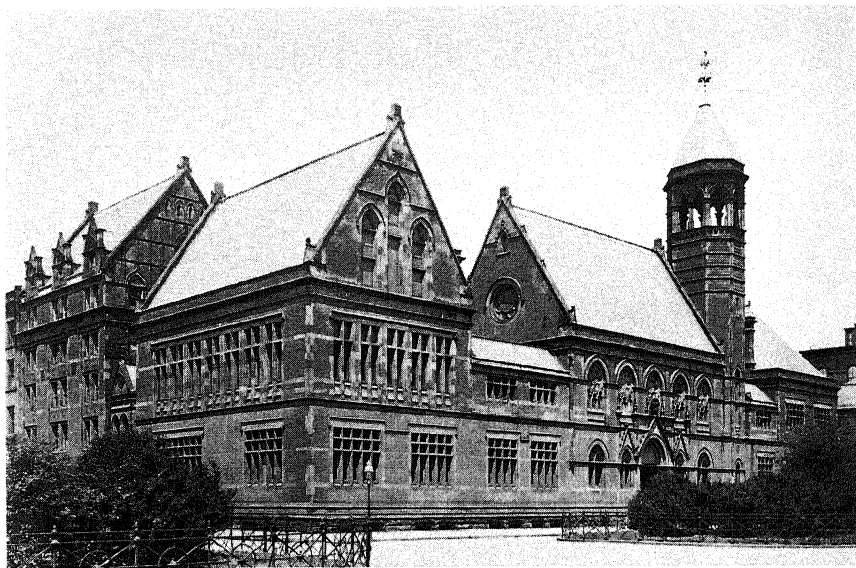


Fig. 7. William C. Potter and James Brown Lord. Union Theological Seminary, New York City, 1881-1884. Left to right: dormitory, library (on corner), chapel, and lecture hall.

sumptuous masonry construction, and his “peculiar power of simplifying a complicated scheme by seizing upon what is really the most important of its requirements, detaching and emphasizing these, and converting the rest into accessories,” Richardson gravitated toward the bold modeling of Romanesque masses around the hierarchy of spaces within. Not only did Romanesque massing appeal to Richardson, but also its integral method of ornamentation, “literally a ‘detailing’ of the mass, and not the addition of anything extraneous.”⁵⁸ Thus Schuyler correctly observed the significance of Richardson’s Marshall Field Wholesale Store as the inspiration for much that was severely relevant to the stripped style of Chicago commercial buildings of the eighties and early nineties (Fig. 51):

It is in this observance of the proprieties of commercial architecture, and in this self-denying rejection of an ornateness improper to it, that the best of the commercial architecture of Chicago is a welcome surprise to

⁵⁸ “The Romanesque Revival in America” (1891-F), pp. 205 and 212. On Richardson’s massing, see also “Glimpses: Chicago” (1891-D), pp. 278f, and “Buildings of Cincinnati” (1908-A, pp. 352-356).

the tourist from the East. When the rebuilding of the business quarter of Boston was in progress, and while that city was for the most part congratulating itself upon the display of skill of its architects for which the fire had opened a field, [Richardson observed to Schuyler] that there was more character in the plain and solid warehouses that had been destroyed than in the florid edifices by which they had been replaced. The saying was just, for the burned Boston was as unmistakably commercial as much of the rebuilt Boston is irrelevantly palatial.⁵⁹

The Marshall Field Store still acknowledged a debt to Romanesque building, although the hierarchical modeling of interior spaces gave way to a severely rectangular mass. On the whole the conception evoked a Florentine Quattrocento palace or a Roman aqueduct rather than the stepped pyramidal massing of Richardson's favorite medieval monuments. In essence, however, the Marshall Field Store was neither Romanesque nor Renaissance, and certainly not ancient Roman. Eclectic reminiscence of past styles all but disappeared in the near realization of what Schuyler liked to term the irreducible "thing itself," the stripped building, stripped for its modern function.

If posterity has finally come to view Richardson's career from its climactic termination in the near-modern Marshall Field building, the nineteenth century viewed his work rather as a quest for an original style through eclectic means, in which such severity as that of the Chicago store was at best only occasionally desirable. Although Schuyler appreciated the "thing itself" when he saw it in Chicago, he was sufficiently a child of his time to have reacted in a less enlightened, more typical manner a year earlier, when in 1891 he concluded his two-part series on American Romanesque for the *Record* by taking a more literal position with respect to creative eclecticism. Here Schuyler held that the modern architect "must select, as a starting point, some phase of past architecture in which a definite style, 'a consistent system of construction and decoration' has already been attained":

Rightly construed this apparent limitation is not a real limitation. It does not forbid eclecticism . . . it requires only that eclecticism shall be so conducted as not to impair the impression of artistic unity, of style, of "a consistent system of construction and decoration." One may compose well in any style that fulfills this definition, and may add to it details and

⁵⁹ "Glimpses: Chicago" (1891-D), p. 264. Schuyler refers to the fire of 1872, which substantially leveled downtown Boston. He did criticize the composition of the Marshall Field Store; see "The Romanesque Revival in America" (1891-F), pp. 216f.

features which past practitioners of the style did not use. . . . A style like a language is dead when it ceases to grow and change.⁶⁰

Schuyler elaborated this statement most completely in an essay, "An American Cathedral," which was published with his Chicago essay in *American Architecture*.⁶¹ Probably unconsciously, he juxtaposed two approaches to Richardson—one viewing him as a creative eclectic, and the other as a modern prophet, who in the Marshall Field Store had very nearly freed his work of its eclectic borrowings. The essay concerns Richardson's project of 1882–1883 for All Saints in Albany, and is important only for its point of view, since its argument is somewhat tortuous, while the project is, to modern eyes, both too literalistic in its recall of Romanesque prototypes and somewhat awkward in certain details to boot (Figs. 39–43). Of some of this awkwardness Schuyler was aware, particularly of the wooden roof which Richardson introduced into the interior of the building and which his critic somewhat excuses as a vain attempt to meet the budget (Fig. 43). In an absolute sense, however, Schuyler considered the roof disastrous. He opened his essay with the familiar rationalistic complaint that it violated the canon of "constructive honesty," since, in hanging from the gable above, the interior roof concealed its support. Moreover, the masonry exterior led one to expect a masonry vault inside. In dealing with this expectation Schuyler reached the core of his argument. Suppose that masonry vaulting had been employed in the nave, crossing, and choir, as Richardson apparently intended for the aisles? Ideally this should have been groin vaulting. But here Schuyler foresaw a dilemma—from our present vantage point, a sterile dilemma. Because the particular Romanesque style which Richardson conjured for All Saints had historically used barrel (or tunnel) vaults, could one legitimately transform these to groin vaults in a modern adaptation? Yes, Schuyler argued, the modern architect could thus adjust his prototype. He could legitimately go further. Since groin vaults permitted lighter supports and larger windows, he might, as Richardson did here, introduce Gothic elements into his Romanesque fabric. In fact, the architect was duty bound to do so wherever a superior solution went beyond its more elemental formulation, even though he employed the earlier style as his starting point, and especially if the later solution

⁶⁰ "Romanesque Revival in America" (1891–F), pp. 222f.

⁶¹ "American Cathedral" (1892–A), pp. 229–245.

tended to increase the "organic unity" of what had been previously imperfectly articulated. In Schuyler's own words, "If the problem [the architect] is working at has been successfully solved heretofore, he is not at liberty to ignore this solution because it falls without the limits of the historical period he has proposed to himself, and to content himself with an incomplete solution."⁶² Thus Schuyler praised the pointed arches (instead of round ones) in Richardson's clerestory. He admired the manner in which Richardson had combined the Gothic front of Notre Dame in Paris with Romanesque elements in order to create his own west façade. Similarly he praised the mixture of elements in the transept portals, where Richardson had woven motifs from the transept portals of Chartres into his Romanesque mass (Fig. 39). Such interpolations, where they integrally furthered the architect's conception and did not appear as mere addenda, preserved the past style as a "living language" capable of fresh expression.

If, in All Saints, Richardson enlarged the expressive potential of a past style by his creative eclecticism, he further revived the style by attempting solutions to a problem which, in Schuyler's opinion, none of his medieval prototypes—neither Romanesque nor Gothic—had solved. To him, the weakness of all medieval architecture was its failure sufficiently to celebrate the crossing of the church so that the exterior mass built consistently toward the central feature, while this central feature unified the interior space. For the apse end of his cathedral (Fig. 40), Richardson followed Romanesque convention, but too literally. In one of his rare criticisms of planning, Schuyler rightly attacked Richardson for trivializing the magnificent motif of Romanesque apsidal shapes by closing them off as a series of vestries. Indeed, the plan (Fig. 41) reveals how Richardson artificially expanded a relatively small cross-shaped church by peripheral chambers, vestibules, and cloisters in order to give his building breadth. It was, however, Richardson's inventive broadening of the west elevation by outflanking the flanking towers with low polygonal turrets which Schuyler especially commended (Fig. 42). With these stubby turrets as

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 239. On Richardson's introduction of pointed arches into his "Romanesque," it should be noted that the competition specifically called for a "Gothic" building. See van Rensselaer, *Richardson*, pp. 87f. Hence the pointed arches may have been introduced for reasons other than those of pure design as Schuyler suggests. Ironically for Schuyler's reasoning, Richardson seems to have retrogressed from the fully articulated style demanded by the competition to the more rudimentary articulation of the Romanesque of his design.

a visual anchor, Richardson piled up a graduated sequence of forms toward the massive crossing tower, while squeezing the traditionally elongated nave and choir toward the central feature. As in Trinity Church in Boston, but here more subtly if still too literally, Richardson revealed his concern for unifying a hierarchical cluster of spaces in a broad sculptural mound of masonry. If in All Saints he thereby succeeded in unifying the exterior mass in a manner, as Schuyler believed, superior to all medieval prototypes, the tower at the center did not similarly unify the interior.

In Mr. Richardson's design the tall and narrow dome at the crossing would not be apprehensible as a crowning feature, except from a point of view almost directly beneath it, while its external form [a square] does not imitate its interior function [a dome]. It was a true feeling that led the Italian Renaissance to embrace the aisles as well as the nave under the central dome, though they clothed their construction in untrue forms. To develop true forms for it is the one advance upon past ecclesiastical architecture which seems to be possible, and to develop these may be said to be the central problem on design in an American cathedral.⁶³

"An American Cathedral" therefore suggests that the creative eclectic can revitalize the past forms he uses in two ways. First, he can mix styles from various historical periods when it serves his purpose. Second, he can solve problems left unresolved by his prototypes. To Schuyler, All Saints illustrates, although not without certain imperfections, both kinds of improvement. The value of pursuing the somewhat barren convolution of his reasoning in this essay is simply that it indicates the position of a rationalist who attempts to make a literalistic eclecticism a responsible esthetic toward the attainment of a serious architecture rather than a grab-bag of motifs to be rifled by "taste." What in the late nineteenth century may have seemed a progressive point of view appears in our own day inhibiting to the attainment of a mature critical position with which to appraise modern architecture. Where Richardson's Marshall Field Store and the severity of the early Chicago School provided firm footing, Schuyler advanced far and fast. But with less adventurous designs he lost this

⁶³ "American Cathedral" (1892-A), p. 244. The argument of the preceding paragraph extends from pp. 234-244. Schuyler admitted that the tall central towers of English and some German cathedrals did celebrate the crossing, but as an abrupt incident rather than as the culmination of the consistent building of the total mass.

firm footing. The rational justification of a literalistic eclecticism is spongy ground, where stepping out is also sinking in. It is, to be sure, well above what Schuyler regarded as the boggish eclecticism of taste, but it is well below the firmer rationality of the protomodern, where what may have begun as eclecticism transcends its starting point through the steady application of "reason" to modern problems. In discussing the two sides of Richardson's career—as eclectic and as protomodern—Schuyler unconsciously displayed the opposed, but related, limits of his own critical position. Sometimes we shall find him slipping back toward the minimum position for rationalistic theory; at other times reaching for the point where nineteenth-century rationalism becomes the basis for the modern theory of the twentieth century.

The two sides of Richardson's career are implicitly paralleled by the two kinds of error which Schuyler found in the work of most of those who vainly attempted to appropriate the master's style. The first and more common error was that of seeing Richardson merely as an eclectic and thus thinking his Romanesque details more significant than his principles. This literal use of Richardson was doubly deplorable, according to Schuyler, because, "In Richardson's best work there is apt to be some questionable detail, since the success or failure of his building is commonly decided before the consideration of detail arises, and it is this questionable detail that the imitators are apt to reproduce without asking it any questions."⁶⁴ A subtler error was that of partially comprehending the true nature of Richardson's buildings as austere masses depending on this boldness for their quality, but of so exaggerating their forcefulness as quite literally to create the "dignified pile of rocks" (minus the dignity) by which the architect himself once characterized his courthouse complex in Pittsburgh. As an example of this second kind of misunderstanding of Richardson's work, Schuyler cited McKim, Mead & White's early and excellent First Methodist Church in Baltimore of 1882-1886, almost their only venture into Romanesque (Fig. 35). Schuyler wished that the tower were "more carefully wrought out in detail. The masses are so powerful that they would have borne a much higher elaboration than they have received. . . . Rudeness is the defect of the quality of massiveness that so eminently belongs to the Romanesque, but it is not in itself an

⁶⁴ "Glimpses: Chicago" (1891-D), p. 280.

artistic quality." In his insistence on a "modeled" architecture, Eidlitz had made the same criticism of all Romanesque. He would surely have concurred with Schuyler that the Baltimore church possessed an "effect of rudeness and archaism that seems affected and that has a dangerous tendency to convert it, in spite of its evidently structural character and of its mass, into 'scene painter's' architecture." ⁶⁵ How prophetic of the abstract formalism which McKim, Mead & White would shortly espouse! And where so talented a firm handled neo-Romanesque too rudely to suit Schuyler's taste, less competent firms concocted still bulkier effects, lacking that articulation through sequences of masses, through moldings, and through color or texture by which Richardson overcame the sense of inertness in his bulky masses.

Even Richardson, however, was not beyond Schuyler's reproach, as witness the fortified character of the stretches of granite wall in his J. J. Glessner house in Chicago (Fig. 59). Of Richardson's other Chicago house of the same years, the almost equally severe Franklin MacVeagh house, Schuyler believed that "The sensitive architect must yearn to set the stone-cutters at work anew to bring out the expression of those parts that are especially in need of rhetorical exposition, to accentuate the sills of the arcades, to define and refine their arches, to emphasize the continuous line of the abacus, and especially to mark the summit of the sloping basement, which is now merged into the plane of the main wall, without the suggestion of a plinth" ⁶⁶ (Fig. 58). By implication, he set the relatively unarticulated mass of the MacVeagh house against the even simpler, but decisively articulated, block of the Marshall Field Store. In short, Schuyler pleaded for the "punctuation" of the wall by specifying base, lintel, sill, cornice, and so on, and thus making it more "rhetorical." Or, for the modern sensibility, Schuyler would have gladly shifted to his organic metaphor, and asserted that such articulation makes visible the architectural functions within the wall.

Could the vigor of Richardson's style be maintained without its

⁶⁵ "Glimpses of Western Architecture: St. Paul and Minneapolis" (1891-E), p. 297. "Romanesque Revival in America" (1891-F), p. 214. The church is now the Lovely Lane Methodist Church. Although the tower appears so rude as to be without prototype, it is copied from S. Maria in Pomposa. On Eidlitz's attitude toward Romanesque, see above, p. 31. See also "American Cathedral" (1892-A), pp. 240f.

⁶⁶ "Glimpses: Chicago" (1891-D), p. 282.

tendency toward ponderous archaism? On this possibility, according to Schuyler, depended the validity of Richardson's example for other architects. "As the besetting tendency of Gothic is to tenuity and complication and unrest," he wrote in 1891, "so the besetting tendency of Romanesque is to clumsiness and crudity and rudeness." By 1891, he believed that Gothic was too specialized as a style, both as a reflection of buttressing and as a perfected system of membering, to offer a prototype for modern building. He preferred the less specialized, unsystematic Romanesque, which had never developed into a perfected type, but only provided that the massiveness of historical Romanesque, wholly inappropriate for most modern use, could be extended toward more elegant expression. "It is in this direction that modern architects may develop Romanesque into the elegance of later Gothic, without direct resort to Gothic precedents, and without losing the vigor and massiveness of Romanesque as we know it." In short, Richardson's example in his design for All Saints Cathedral showed the way. "It is . . . by taking [Romanesque] as a point of departure and not as a point of arrival, that the architects of our day can create the beginnings of a true and living architecture, such as for four centuries the world has not seen. The Romanesque revival in this country is the most promising sign of such a movement that has yet appeared." Were there any signs of this elegant Romanesque? Schuyler saw two of them. Much later, in 1903, long after Romanesque had become a dead issue with respect to the development of a modern American style, Schuyler remarked nostalgically that Stanford White's portals for St. Bartholomew's in New York, just then completed, provided an example of what he had meant in the early nineties. Modeled on those at St. Gilles (and possibly on the intermediate copy of 1897 for Trinity Church in Boston), White's portals were added to the front of James Renwick's church on Madison Avenue, before their removal to Park Avenue where they now serve as the frontispiece to one of Bertram Goodhue's finest buildings (1917-1918). Here, the combination of Romanesque vigor with classical elegance illustrated what Schuyler had intended, although in an example which was as limited in its architectural implications as it was belated historically. More to the point was the work of John Wellborn Root. Of Schuyler's famous essay of 1891 on the architecture of Chicago, Root, whose premature death had just occurred, was the hero—and

precisely because his architecture pointed the way toward an elegant Romanesque.⁶⁷

Schuyler singled out Burnham & Root's Insurance Exchange, Rookery, and Phoenix Buildings (all three completed in 1885-1886) as by far the most successful and impressive of the business buildings of Chicago (Figs. 54, 56). He acutely observed that Root's Romanesque was a personal version of Richardson's and, further, that the later version of the neo-Romanesque proved the more influential of the two on Midwestern building. As to how Root's Romanesque specifically differed from Richardson's, Schuyler was vague. He implied, however, that Root's was the lighter, more linear, more fluid style; hence it was more appropriate to the finesse required in brick and terra cotta than Richardson's more monumental effects in his favorite granite. Schuyler especially praised the entrance of the Phoenix Building as "one of the most beautiful and artistic works that American architecture has to show, so admirably proportioned it is, and so admirably detailed, so clear and emphatic without exaggeration is the expression of the structure and so rich and refined the ornament" (Fig. 55). In his exceptional praise of the Insurance Exchange, Rookery, and Phoenix Buildings when he visited Chicago around 1890, Schuyler ignored other, to us more important, buildings—even more important buildings by Burnham & Root. Although all three were worthy of Schuyler's attention, their castellated qualities and Romanesque embellishment remained somewhat unintegrated with the building mass. In observing the picturesque exterior walls of the Rookery, for example, Schuyler failed to observe the far more relevant walls of the interior light court with their severely plain, smooth brick surfaces extravagantly opened by broad window bands. But in 1891 Schuyler's attention was directed toward the potential of Richardsonian Romanesque for a modern American style.

In another essay of 1891, Schuyler asserted that this style had become "more nearly the American style than any that preceded it, with the exception of the [Colonial] American Renaissance. . . ." Looking at the Chicago office buildings derived from the Marshall Field Store confirmed Schuyler's conviction that Richardsonian

⁶⁷ On White's portals, see below "The Work of Barney & Chapman" (1904-D), pp. 132f. On Root, see "Romanesque Revival in America" (1891-F), pp. 224f; "Recent Church Building in New York" (1903-C, pp. 10f); "Glimpses: Chicago" (1891-D), pp. 269f, the citation in the next paragraph from p. 274.

Romanesque could be generalized as a "common style, an understood way of working, founded upon 'a consistent system of construction and decoration' [which] is a chief need, not merely of American architecture, but of all modern architecture." If Victorian Gothic had also promised a style based on a "system of construction," its restless diversity—"a thing of shreds and patches," as Schuyler put it—encouraged idiosyncrasy rather than a "common style."⁶⁸ On the other hand, the breadth and simplicity of Richardson's massing, the boldness and logic by which its apertures evoked the space inside (a space, to repeat, which Schuyler largely ignored), the directness and yet sumptuousness of his construction: these qualities did offer the basis for a serious style transcending individual whimsy, while encouraging individual expression.

Such was his hope. But the faulty interpretations of Richardson's work prevailed: on the one hand, the literalistic application of Romanesque ornament; on the other, the flagrant exaggeration of bulk. Much later, in 1911, Schuyler sadly confessed what he sensed around 1890, "It was presently seen how personal and incommunicable his success had been and how little dependent upon his choice of style. Richardsonian Romanesque, it was practically agreed, was a perturbation, not an evolution." On the whole (Schuyler was speaking of the ecclesiastical work of Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson), "The church architect was fortunate who entered upon his practice only after the disturbing element had been removed."⁶⁹

Richardson's final work brought American architecture to the threshold of modernity. Schuyler's essays on bridges and skyscrapers cross that threshold. In his early and classic essay of 1883 on "The Brooklyn Bridge as a Monument," it was not so much his evaluation of a bridge as such which measured his modernity, but his appraisal of it "as a monument" worthy of architectural consideration. As he remarked retrospectively in 1909, he believed that his essay on the Brooklyn Bridge represented the first attempt in the United States at

⁶⁸ "The Romanesque Revival in New York" (1891-C), p. 199; "Romanesque Revival in America" (1891-F), p. 201. See also "Glimpses: St. Paul and Minneapolis" (1891-E), p. 298. The Allusion to the Mikado occurs in "Romanesque Revival in America" (1891-F), p. 223, and "A 'Modern Classic'" (1904-C), p. 591.

⁶⁹ "The Works of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson" (1911-A, p. 16); see also "Glimpses: Chicago" (1891-D), pp. 280f. "Glimpses: Chicago" (1891-D), pp. 278, 280.

an esthetic analysis of a work of engineering.⁷⁰ In confronting the architectural revolution of his day Schuyler extended the range of his sources. He clearly moved beyond Ruskin, who hated metal building, and beyond Eidlitz, who, as we shall observe, admired the Brooklyn Bridge. He also went beyond Richardson's traditionalism, although, had he lived longer, the architect who once expressed his desire to design a grain elevator and the interior of a river boat⁷¹ would surely have faced the technology of metal construction. In appraising the real world of engineering, Schuyler even advanced beyond Viollet-le-Duc's invention of a fantastic Gothic-inspired metallic architecture, in which metal construction is an adjunct to masonry-bearing elements and vaulting.⁷² Such is the measure of the largeness of a point of view which could, in 1883, anticipate a theme so central to creative achievement in the future.

This is not to say that Schuyler was uncritical of the Brooklyn Bridge. In fact his strictures in the essay outweigh his praise, though without canceling his admiration. His criticism centered in the failure of the Roeblings (father and son) sufficiently to articulate the masonry towers, anchorages, and approach viaducts of the bridge, as he thought Richardson had similarly failed in his Chicago houses, McKim, Mead & White in their Baltimore church, and numerous other Richardsonian imitators in the "archaic" lumps which they mistook for the master's teaching. In Schuyler's opinion, the towers of the bridge should have been sculpturally more expressive of their function. Thus the four vertical piers that lift the cables should have projected strongly from the plane of the stabilizing horizontal screens of masonry above the pointed arches through which the roadways run. This fault of modeling was compounded by the inexpressive disappearance of the cables into the beetling cornice block with no visual indication of the curved metal saddle inside, over which the cables were humped. Finally, the perpendicular face of the masonry anchorages on either bank insufficiently expressed the resistance of these blocks against the pull of the cables (Fig. 8, 89, 90, 91). As a result, these parts possessed the "defects of being rudimentary, of not being completely developed."⁷³

⁷⁰ "The Brooklyn Bridge as a Monument" (1883-A), pp. 331-344; "Our Four Big Bridges" (1909-C, p. 148).

⁷¹ Van Rensselaer, *Richardson*, p. 22.

⁷² See above, p. 33n.

⁷³ "The Brooklyn Bridge" (1883-A), p. 342.



Fig. 8. John and Washington Roebling. Brooklyn Bridge over the East River, New York City, 1867–1873.

Not that Roebling should have summoned the “aid of a commonplace architect to plaster his structure with triglyphs or to indent it with trefoils,” Schuyler wrote,

But an architect who pursued his calling in the spirit and with the skill of the medieval builders . . . [one] who knew in his province the lesson the engineer has re-enforced in his, that “Nature can only be commanded by obeying her,” and that the function of an organism, in art as in nature, must determine its form—such an architect might have helped the designer of the Brooklyn Bridge to make it one of the noblest monuments of architecture in the world, as it is one of the greatest and most honorable works of engineering.⁷⁴

In fact Schuyler had a specific architect in mind. As he confessed many years later, Eidlitz was so distressed by the piers that he offered through a friend to redesign them; but the friend refused to hurt John Roebling’s feelings by asking.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 343f.

⁷⁵ “Leopold Eidlitz” (1908–C), pp. 154f.

Eidlitz and Schuyler were right in their criticism, although they may have made too much of it. If the ungainly masonry piers are somewhat too blunt fully to record the organic ideal, their exaggerated massiveness provides an expressive foil for the "swift swoop" of the cables,⁷⁶ which Schuyler found faultless. Had Eidlitz's projected modeling too severely gouged the mass or (especially damaging) too gently rounded its cap in suggesting the hump of the cable within, then the magnificent opposition of the compressive bulk of the towers against the tensile web of the cables might have lost some of that force which has made the Brooklyn Bridge a passion of poets and painters, rivaled only by the Eiffel Tower as the contribution to the muses of nineteenth-century engineering.

Aside from his critique of the Brooklyn Bridge, Schuyler wrote six more essays on bridges, all between 1900 and 1910.⁷⁷ It would be a pleasure to add that all were as sound as the first, but this is not the case, although the validity of their central thesis goes far to redeem their flaws in detail. Throughout these essays Schuyler addresses himself to the problem which he had stated in his earliest: that of monumentality in engineering and the manner in which architects and engineers should cooperate, working as partners from the conception of the project to its completion. The groundwork for such partnership must be laid in the professional schools. Again, in this concern with rationalistic architectural training, Schuyler recalls Eidlitz's (and perhaps Viollet-le-Duc's) preoccupation with the same problem.⁷⁸ Only such partnership could eliminate, on the one hand, the typical engineer's callousness to appearance, and, on the other, the typical architect's indifference to structure in cosmetically "beautifying" whatever the engineer's calculations provided.

Sound as this generalization was, especially when taken in conjunction with Schuyler's esthetic criticism of those bridges he considered, both generalization and criticism tended to be weakened by the poverty of his illustration. Even the best journalistic (as opposed to scholarly) criticism is at the mercy of what it must "cover." Here is

⁷⁶ "The Brooklyn Bridge" (1883-A), p. 343.

⁷⁷ See below, "Art in Modern Bridges" (1900-D), "Monumental Engineering" (1901-B), "New York Bridges" (1905-C); see also "Bridges and the Art Commission" (1907-G), "Our Four Big Bridges" (1909-C), and "Two Bridges in Berlin" (1910-B). He also devoted a section of his essay on Pittsburgh (1911-I) to the city's bridges.

⁷⁸ See especially "Monumental Engineering" (1901-B), pp. 345-350.

one example. On the basis of an absolutist critical standard and with the added advantage of hindsight, the scholarly critic can now simply dismiss as unworthy of discussion the designs resulting from the competition of 1899 for the Memorial Bridge over the Potomac, while the journalist critic was rightly supposed to evaluate such offerings at the very time of their presentation.⁷⁹ All but one of the designs showed a series of low metal arches dressed in stone skipping from either shore to a central span designed to lift above the boat channel between flanking towers masquerading as classicistic pylons or (in most of the designs) as Roman triumphal arches (Fig. 9). Schuyler properly criticized the arches because, as symbolic portals, they ludicrously doubled the entrance motif. Although overly lenient with the pylons, he seemed none too enthusiastic about the appropriateness of the use of antique literalism to create a modern symbol. Moreover, he attacked the veneers of masonry concealing the metal skeleton beneath. Either the federal government should meet the extra cost of masonry construction, should "sacrifice" (to call up one of Ruskin's Lamps) to the memorializing spirit of the occasion, or should frankly reveal the metal construction and create a modern monument. All of this was sound advice, axiomatic now, yet progressive at the time. But Schuyler's wisdom tended to become lost in his quibble as to which of several mediocre designs was the most deserving. After much thrashing about, he reluctantly concluded that none of the designs equaled a predecessor prepared in 1886 by Captain T. W. Symons and Paul Pelz for the same much delayed commission (Fig. 10). This was a fantastic, but virile, admixture of metal arches leaping between medieval towers and turrets in masonry, a bridge more akin to the Smithsonian Institution than to the arcadian classicism which was just beginning to fill the Mall. Although Schuyler admitted that the aggressive medievalism might seem somewhat archaic in 1901, he praised the revelation of contrasting materials, the compressive bulk of the towers properly subordinating the arches of the roadway, and finally the sculptural modeling of the piers, whose prowlike projections for ice-breaking upstream were entirely eliminated downstream, where they were unnecessary. "Comparing [this early scheme] with the corresponding features in any of the [later] competitive designs suggests inquiring

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* The introduction to the article only is reproduced in this volume, not the analysis of the specific designs, which is précised immediately below in this introduction.

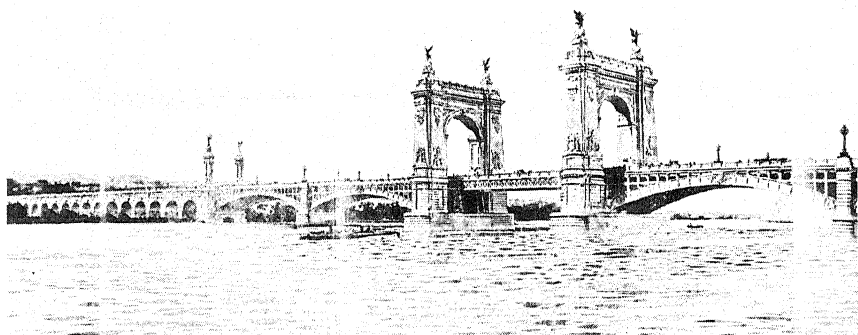


Fig. 9. William H. Burr, engineer. Winning design in the competition for the Grant Memorial Bridge over the Potomac, Washington, D. C., 1899.

whether the functional modeling of the masses . . . can be so effectively done in the more formal [classicistic Beaux Arts] styles which have succeeded as in the free architecture which reverts to medieval prototypes.”⁸⁰ He concluded with an expression of disappointment that the classicized veneer of stone over the metal skeleton in these designs should exclude the possibility of anything as significant as James B. Ead’s bridge (1868–1874) over the Mississippi at St. Louis, or William Hutton and Edward Kendall’s Washington Bridge (1886–1889) over the Harlem at 181st Street in New York (Figs. 13, 96).

If the thoughtful journalistic critic is frequently compromised by the mediocrity of what he is given to evaluate, he is sometimes misled when all of his critical tenets are realized in an inferior production. Where the dogma is perfect, the critic is too often fatally predisposed to the artistry. A clear case of the critic’s disease is afforded by Schuyler’s “Our Four Big Bridges” of 1909, in which he commented on the four New York bridges which at that time spanned the East River. In addition to the Brooklyn Bridge (a recapitulation of his earlier essay), Schuyler followed chronology in assessing the Williamsburg Bridge at Delancey Street, the Queensborough at 59th Street, and the

⁸⁰ “Monumental Engineering” (1901–B, pp. 637f). From our present vantage point it is easy to underestimate the progressiveness of Schuyler’s position. The designs for the Potomac competition were heralded by the engineer Henry Grattan Tyrrell, who was himself interested in the esthetics of engineering and was rather progressive in his point of view, as “some of the finest bridge designs which have ever been made in America.” See Tyrrell, *History of Bridge Engineering* (Chicago, 1911), p. 102.

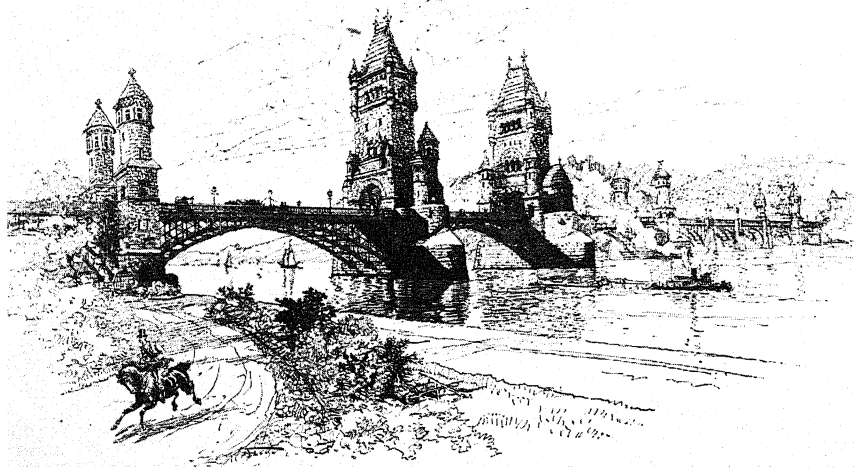


Fig. 10. Capt. Thomas W. Symons, engineer; Paul Pelz, architect. Proposed Grant Memorial Bridge over the Potomac, Washington, D. C., 1886.

Manhattan north of Market Street.⁸¹ The gawky Williamsburg Bridge was clearly inferior to the Roeblings' masterpiece. But Schuyler held, as few would hold today, that the last two bridges surpassed the Roeblings' achievement.

Despite this deplorable conclusion, there is absolutely nothing wrong with Schuyler's reasoning in this essay, which as a case study of right reasoning and wrong conclusion especially merits attention. The criteria Schuyler used to analyze the esthetic merit of the four bridges might profitably be applied to the esthetic analysis of any bridge. Thus, he makes four specific comments on the Williamsburg Bridge (Fig. 11). First, he did not like the "bandy-legged" profiling of its towers. Second, the roadway of the Williamsburg did not arch in a continuous curve from shore to shore like that of the Brooklyn, since straight sections from shore to either tower gave way to an arch only in the center. Third, the elimination of the catenary curve where the cables fell from the tower to their anchorages at either end of the bridge

⁸¹ "Our Four Big Bridges" (1909-C). Williamsburg Bridge, construction started 1896, opened 1903. Queensborough Bridge, 1901-1909. Manhattan Bridge, 1901-1909. The granite work of Manhattan Plaza, designed by Carrère & Hastings, completed in 1912, and discussed by Schuyler, demolished, 1961, for connections to the proposed Lower Manhattan Expressway. On the Williamsburg, see also "Art in Modern Bridges" (1900-D), p. 361.

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Fig. 11. L. L. Buck, chief engineer. Williamsburg Bridge over the East River, New York City, 1896-1903.

destroyed the melody of the titanic swing from shore to tower to tower and back to shore of the Brooklyn Bridge. Finally the deep trussing of the roadway made this element appear so dominant that it almost seemed to support its towers.

Having disposed of the Williamsburg, Schuyler turned to the spans over the East River which were built next. Both the Queensborough and the Manhattan were substantially the work of Gustav Lindenthal, who was to realize his own East River classic only in the Hell Gate Bridge of 1916. Both were designed while he briefly served as head of the City Bridge Department during the year 1902-1903. Both, but especially the Queensborough, had been started by a predecessor, whose designs Lindenthal modified. His successor in turn slightly changed Lindenthal's plans for the Manhattan after a controversy about the structural novelty of its roadway, a dispute which accounted for the brevity of Lindenthal's term of office. To Schuyler, his short tenure with the city was especially significant because he reversed earlier practice in the Bridge Department by associating himself with leading architectural firms (Beaux Arts firms as it happened) from the beginning of his designs. Palmer & Hornbostel served as consultants for the Queensborough Bridge, Carrère & Hastings for the Manhattan.

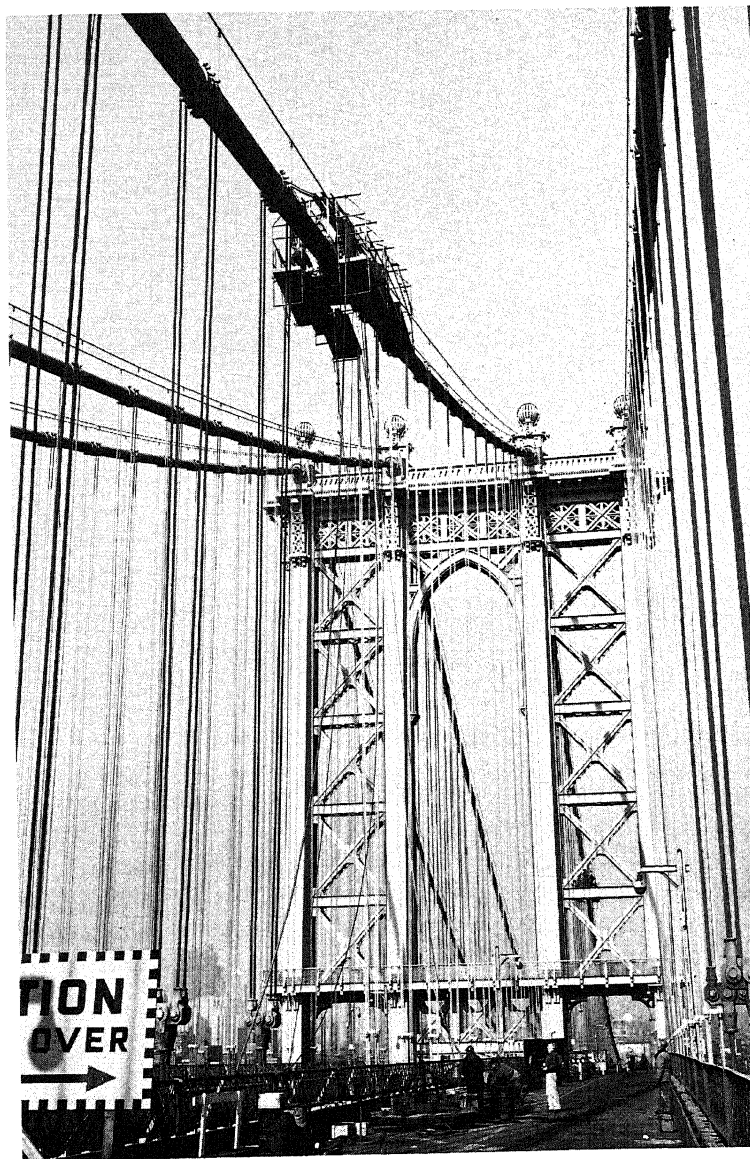


Fig. 12. Gustav Lindenthal, engineer; Carrère & Hastings, architects.
Manhattan Bridge over the East River, New York City, 1901–1909.

These bridges displayed open metalwork towers, a type of construction which Schuyler in another essay conservatively held to be inferior in appearance to masonry but nevertheless capable of distinction if candidly handled, since "any construction mechanically sound is susceptible of artistic expression."⁸² The point of the essay, however, is that in both bridges the saddle plates in the towers and the anchorages on the shores became visually expressive. Hence he thought both bridges, but especially the Manhattan, surpassed the historic Brooklyn Bridge esthetically (Fig. 12). Here is a clear instance of the victory of critical dogma over critical perception—an illustration of the central weakness of rationalistic theories of architecture, despite their immense potential for extending the critic's grasp and stabilizing his reactions. Where formalistic theories exaggerate the purely visual aspects of architecture in their emphasis on abstract shape and configuration, rationalistic theories, unless cautiously applied, tend to equate ultimate quality with the degree to which extravisual performance is made apparent. Surely the ball-like finials which celebrate the cable saddles in the Manhattan, and the minimal drama in the opposition of cable to tower constitute an image which is visually, and therefore experientially, inferior to that of the Brooklyn Bridge. Comparable observations can be made of Schuyler's preference for the modeling of the masonry anchorages of the Manhattan over those of the Brooklyn Bridge, both of which he illustrated in his essays. Gratuitous classicistic embellishment of an over-elegant sort trivializes the admirable modeling of the Manhattan's anchorages. Particularly to modern eyes attuned to the primitive, the more rudimentary anchorages of the Brooklyn are likely to appear more stirring, and this despite their imperfections, which Schuyler correctly noticed. Here Schuyler's logic was impeccable and doubtless furnished a lesson for future bridge-builders. But where such logic is so clearly overbalanced by power of expression, superior expressiveness triumphs. No critical axioms, whether visual or logical, can eliminate the critic's ultimate responsibility always to appraise the quality of experience generated by the form.

If hindsight makes it appear that Schuyler was too lavish in his praise of the Manhattan Bridge simply because it so evidently met his

⁸² "Our Four Big Bridges" (1909-C, p. 158). Schuyler is ambiguous about metal piers. In the same article (p. 151) he seems to make his position clear in speaking of the Williamsburg Bridge: "One can hardly imagine an engineer preferring a tower of attenuated metal to one of massive stonework if he were free to choose." See following discussion.

standards, his esthetic standards for bridges were nevertheless strikingly progressive for a time when, as he makes clear in several of his essays, little thought was given to the esthetics of those conspicuous structures.⁸³ Just as skyscrapers attracted Schuyler's attention because they presented the most recalcitrant architectural problem at the end of the nineteenth century, so the monumental possibilities of metal bridge construction interested him. Aside from the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges, Schuyler especially praised one other suspension structure, Gustav Lindenthal's unrealized project (first design c. 1887) for a suspension span of the Hudson (Figs. 98, 99).⁸⁴ For each of the twinned towers, eight metal ribs, webbed with metal latticing, curved gently inward from their base to create a profile reminiscent of the Eiffel Tower. Save for the genteel incongruity of the capping cupolas which contained the saddle plates for the double cable system, the picturesque grandeur of the conception fully merited Schuyler's enthusiasm.

With respect to metal arches, Schuyler singled out for special comment three bridges already mentioned. There was, first, the medieval fantasy for the Potomac by Symons and Pelz. However irrelevant the medieval towers appear by standards of modern engineering, the design promised a dramatic contrast between the metal arches and their masonry piers, while the masonry would seem to have presented a bold image in its functional modeling and broad massing. Compared to the superficial medievalism of the Tower Bridge in London (Fig. 103), which opened in 1894, the Grant Memorial Bridge should have been much bolder, both as engineering and as image, had it been built. For modern engineering, both James Eads' St. Louis Bridge over the Mississippi and William Hutton and Edward Kendall's Washington Bridge over the Harlem in New York are more to the point (Figs. 13, 97). Schuyler recalled his criticism of the Brooklyn Bridge in finding the masonry piers of the Harlem span somewhat too thin and undermodeled. Yet the arches themselves "would be difficult to overpraise," being "perhaps the most conspicuously successful monument that American engineering has produced."⁸⁵

The curves of cables and arches gave these structures an advantage in monumental bridge construction over what seemed to Schuyler

⁸³ On the scanty attention given to bridge esthetics in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century, see "Monumental Engineering" (1901-B), pp. 348f.

⁸⁴ "Art in Modern Bridges" (1900-D), pp. 361f.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 356.

to be inherently the ugliest of structures suitable for very wide spans. He found the cantilever ugly because the nature of its structure was not immediately visible. The triangular metal brackets built in both directions from their tower supports and narrowing in depth as they projected out over space tended to lose their visual identity as brackets when they connected with the short spans joining them. With his customary courage in tackling the most resistant esthetic problems of his day, however, Schuyler found two outstanding cantilevers to demonstrate his thesis that even this structural type could possess esthetic quality. Inevitably, one of these was the Firth of Forth Bridge (1881-1890) in Scotland by Sir John Fowler and Sir Benjamin Baker, the most heroic of nineteenth-century cantilevers, and still unsurpassed as an image of pterodactylic vigor (Fig. 14). Schuyler admired its power, but with reservation. "The cantilevers themselves of the Forth Bridge make an impression which is the result of a most forceful and even eloquent expression. It is the lack of clear expression of what they sustain, and how they sustain it, that gives the work as a whole the air of an uncouth puzzle."⁸⁶ It was precisely because Jean Louis Résal solved the puzzle of the cantilever with forthright clarity that Schuyler praised his Mirabeau Bridge, completed in 1895, over the Seine at Auteuil (Fig. 92). His admiration for the bridge was the more remarkable at the turn of the century, since the Mirabeau Bridge went little noticed in the general enthusiasm for Résal's Alexander III Bridge (1896-1900), completed in time to link the Exposition of 1900 on the Esplanade des Invalides with the Right Bank (Fig. 93). Garlanded and columned, the extraordinarily flat-arched Alexander III Bridge became the darling of Beaux Arts engineering, while almost every project for city beautification around the turn of the century pointed to this bridge as the *beau idéal* for such civic construction. Schuyler correctly observed the superiority of the less familiar span. "No spectator could mistake the construction for anything but what it is. The suggestion of an arch in the general form of the central span is successfully controverted by the design. One cannot help but seeing that the bridge consists merely of two double brackets balanced on low piers, and the expression of this mechanical arrangement is the design of the bridge. Its one defect of expression is a defect also of beauty."⁸⁷

⁸⁶ "Art in Modern Bridges" (1900-D), p. 364.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

And Schuyler cited the apparent fixity of the bearing on the piers, whereas in reality these had a freedom to move with the expansion and contraction of the cantilevers. But the modeling of the piers, the shallow curve of the cantilevering, the design of struts and braces in the spandrels, and the indication of the structure for the roadway in the masking plate which followed its curve were all admirable. Today the labyrinthine vigor of the Forth Bridge appears far more compelling than the discreet Mirabeau. The heaviness of the membering of the Mirabeau compromises the liteness implicit in the structure. So does the applied decoration, and especially the allegorical sculpture. But we admire the Forth Bridge as a titanic period piece. For all the confusion between engineering and monumentality that it reveals, the Mirabeau cantilevers more closely approximate the manner in which the twentieth century would employ one of its favorite structural devices.

Although primarily interested in the monumental possibilities of engineering, Schuyler was also concerned with everyday engineering, ubiquitously and unpretentiously meeting needs that had to be met. What critic in his day (perhaps even in ours) would have taken a boat trip down the Harlem River to scrutinize its bridges, much as others in Schuyler's position had traveled the Seine? Similarly, he made the circuit of Pittsburgh bridges and late in life, while commuting to and from his home in suburban New Rochelle, he examined stations and factories along the tracks.⁸⁸ A cardinal strength of Schuyler's criticism was his feeling for architecture and engineering not merely as individual achievements but as parts of a larger cultural context. Hence his sensitivity to the architectural character of cities, best exemplified in his classic descriptions of Chicago, his continuing interest in the urban house, his constant concern for the better design of Federal buildings.⁸⁹ Hence too his pleas that the skyscraper be developed with respect to both its architectural and urban possibilities. He especially praised Louis Sullivan's projected Fraternity Temple (1891), where, for the first time in a decisive manner, set-back massing

⁸⁸ On Harlem bridges, see "New York Bridges" (1905-C). On Pittsburgh bridges, see "The Building of Pittsburgh" (1911-I). On commuters' engineering and architecture, see "Along the 'Harlem River Branch'" (1908-G).

⁸⁹ "Glimpses: Chicago" (1891-D) and *A Critique of the Works of Adler & Sullivan*, D. H. Burnham & Co., Henry Ives Cobb (1896-A). On the urban house, see below p. 79n. On Federal buildings, see "Federal Buildings" (1910-C).

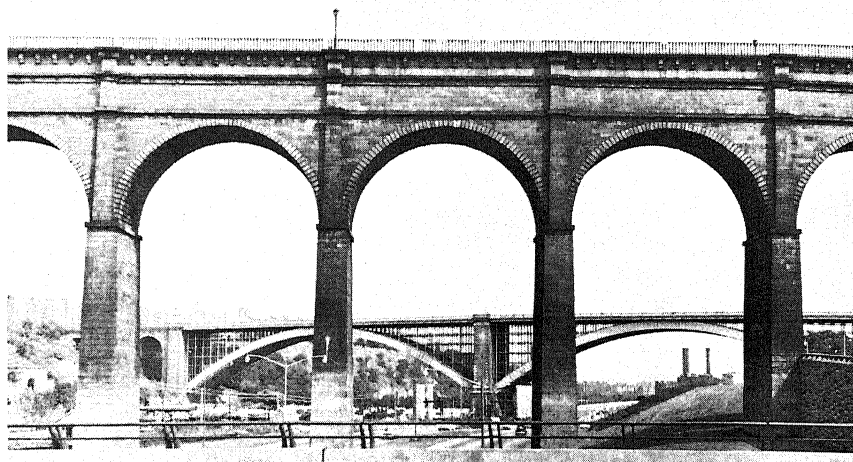


Fig. 13. John B. Jervis, engineer. Aqueduct (High) Bridge over the Harlem, New York City, 1839–1842. Washington Bridge appears in the background.

was used in order to provide light, air, and view for a central tower which rose thirty-five stories at a time when the tallest Chicago building (Burnham & Root's Masonic Building) was only twenty-two stories, and few were half as high. "One can even imagine," Schuyler went on, anticipating an aspect of Le Corbusier's urbanism of the early twenties, "a building of the dimensions of the Fraternity Temple at the center of each square mile, or even less, of a crowded city. . . ." ⁹⁰ He was also attracted to a cross-shaped skyscraper project (again suggestive of Le Corbusier) for Portland, Oregon, and to various zoning proposals which promised to alleviate the jostle of downtown towers. ⁹¹ This interest in the place of the single work as it conditioned and was conditioned by its environment led to Schuyler's cruise of the Harlem to study its miscellany of bridges.

Something about this cruise is at once admirable and touchingly absurd. Most of the bridges he saw were fairly recent ones, occasioned by the burgeoning of traffic between Manhattan and the Bronx, which was then undergoing rapid development. The only impressive spans

⁹⁰ *Adler & Sullivan, Burnham, Cobb* (1896-A), p. 387.

⁹¹ On the Portland building, see "A Pacific Coast Skyscraper" (1911-F). On the skyscraper and the city, see "The Skyscraper Problem" (1903-D), pp. 442-449, and "To Curb the Skyscraper" (1908-D).

over the river were the Washington Bridge and its immediate neighbor John B. Jarvis' High Bridge Aqueduct, 1839-1848 (Fig. 13).⁹² By fortunate chance, the masonry arches of the Aqueduct, designed in the Roman manner as a series of masonry arches to carry water over the Harlem from Croton Reservoir to Manhattan, provide a stunning contrast to the lacy arches of Hutton's bridge. Aside from these notable engineering works, most of the bridges were routine affairs. Most, moreover, were of a particularly ugly type, simple straight or cantilevered metal trusses. The cantilevered trusses were pivoted from a central pier to provide for the passage of boats. Floating down the river, Schuyler ranked the bridges for their esthetic quality, finding two of them especially meritorious. One of these, Alfred Pancoast Boller's Northern Railroad Bridge (1880) at Eighth Avenue, stands close by High Bridge. Built for the New York and Northern Railroad, later the Putnam Division of the New York Central System (hence also known as the Putnam Bridge), and eventually leased to the now abandoned Ninth Avenue Elevated, today the bridge stands permanently open and slightly rusted. Even finer, in Schuyler's opinion, was Theodore Cooper's Second Avenue Bridge (1883-1886), which carried the Third Avenue Elevated over the river, and suffered its fate when the line was razed in 1955-1956 (Fig. 103). Each of these bridges Schuyler found "a graphical exposition, made with neatness, clearness, conciseness and grace that entitle us to apply the term 'beautiful' to a geometrical demonstration in its simplest expression. . . . [They have] an Euclidian 'beauty.'" How clearly they demonstrated the folly of any "attempt to beautify an essentially ugly construction by invoking an artist after the scientist has ruined it artistically, by getting the architect to add some architectural 'features' to the work of the engineer. The observation of Polonius that 'beautified is a vile phrase' applies with particular force to bridge building."⁹³

Nowhere in his writing did Schuyler more clearly express the functional essence, the "thing itself," than in his description of the geometrical clarity which he found amidst the squalor of Harlem River bridging. Although monumental bridges represented the

⁹² Today the handsome juxtaposition of the masonry and metal bridges is being eliminated by the intervention of a bridge linking the George Washington Bridge to the Major Deegan Parkway.

⁹³ "New York Bridges" (1905-C), p. 373.

ultimate (and necessarily the occasional) engineering ideal, there was beauty too in the Euclidean demonstration of the best examples of routine engineering. Insensitivity to the beauty possible in rudimentary engineering made monumental engineering impossible. Or, in another of Schuyler's favorite phrases, this one from Viollet-le-Duc, "Only the primitive can sustain a long career."⁹⁴

In his *Record* article, where Schuyler reproduced a distant profile of the bridge, the attenuated linearism did indeed suggest Euclidean geometry. Viewed closely, the membering of both this bridge and that of the North Central, however cleanly and forcefully organized, appears somewhat heavy compared to the best bridge design of our own day, which makes use of technological advances in metallurgy and continuity in design unavailable around the turn of the century. Paradoxically, comparable bridge trussing earlier in the nineteenth century might well have been lighter, for then loads were lighter too. Compared with twentieth-century possibilities, the latticing of the Mirabeau Bridge and that of Lindenthal's Hudson River project reveal a like degree of heaviness. Even the lacy metal arches of the Washington and St. Louis Bridges depend on a dense interweaving of members, and the masonry piers of these and most of the other metal bridges which Schuyler praised intensify their relatively substantial appearance. In short, in the substantial qualities of their forthright engineering, these bridges not only meet the criterion of "honesty" congenial to Victorian Gothic theory, but that of palpability as well. To a degree they resolve the visual conflict between the attenuation appropriate to metal construction and the substantiality characteristic of masonry structures. In his discussion of skyscrapers, Schuyler found it rather more difficult to resolve the dilemma so nicely.

Of all Schuyler's themes, it is his attention to the skyscraper for which he is best remembered. This is deservedly the case, since no problem interested him more and none did he explore more extensively. Yet concentration on excerpts from a few of Schuyler's essays, especially three written in the early nineties on the Chicago School,⁹⁵ make him appear more certain about the future of the skyscraper than he actually

⁹⁴ Viollet-le-Duc, *Discourses*, ed. Van Brunt, 1, 227.

⁹⁵ "Glimpses: Chicago" (1891-D), pp. 246-291; *Adler & Sullivan, Burnham, Cobb* (1896-A), pp. 377-404 and 405-418.

was. His true position is, if progressive in spirit, somewhat groping in detail and is historically perhaps the more interesting because of this uncertainty. In several repetitious articles published from 1899 to 1909 Schuyler provided what are probably the best early surveys of the development of the skyscraper, the fullest of these essays being "The Evolution of the Skyscraper" of 1909.⁹⁶ In these articles Schuyler traces the origin of the skyscraper to New York. There a somewhat delayed use of the elevator effected the initial breakthrough of the four- and five-story downtown plateau which had hitherto represented the uppermost limits for even the most intrepid climbers. In 1873 both the Western Union Telegraph Building by George B. Post and the Tribune Building by Richard Morris Hunt were approved for ten and a half, and nine stories respectively (Figs. 109, 110). Schuyler held that the evolution of the skyscraper began with these two buildings, since they met the first criterion for a skyscraper—namely, unusual height—even though these beginnings were only completed around 1890 when the masonry bearing-walls finally gave way to the perfected steel skeleton that makes possible the height of today's skyscraper.

Schuyler's own active role as the chronicler of the American skyscraper really began, fittingly enough, with his articles on the Chicago School. These have become classics in the standard interpretation of the School: the influence of the severity of Richardson's Marshall Field Store on the city's architects; the intensely rationalistic bias of the architects, abetted by the no-nonsense attitude of Chicago clients; the blocklike quality of the buildings on generous sites as compared to the tower development in New York; the cardinal role—only slightly exaggerated by Schuyler—of the firm of Burnham & Root in the creation of the Chicago type. Since Schuyler has helped to make these ideas common knowledge, we can ignore them here for those remarks which sharply define his personal view.

⁹⁶ "The Skyscraper Up-to-Date" (1899-A), pp. 437-441; "Some Recent Skyscrapers" (1907-E); "The Evolution of the Skyscraper" (1909-J), pp. 419-436. The historical sections of these essays are repetitious. See also Barr Ferree, "The High Building and Its Art," *Scribner's Magazine*, 15 (Mar. 1894), 297-318. Schuyler's articles presumably comprise an important starting point for Winston Weisman, "New York and the Problem of the First Skyscraper," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 12 (Mar. 1953), 13-21, who elaborates and extends Schuyler's synoptic history. A critique of this valuable article with respect to Weisman's definition of the "skyscraper," and a more precise evaluation of Schuyler's admittedly casual use of the term, appear in J. Carson Webster, "The Skyscraper: Logical and Historical Consideration," *ibid.*, 18 (Dec. 1959), 126-139.

To begin, it is especially important to make the simplest sort of observation, one which nevertheless has gone unnoted. Commentators on Schuyler's point of view have tended to lump together all of his writing on the Chicago School, as though it were a single essay—or at least as though the essay published in 1891 represented precisely the same position as those written in 1895. This is not true. Schuyler's first essay, republished in *American Architecture* in 1892, represents a more impressionistic treatment of the Chicago School than his later essays. What did he see at this time? Enough to justify his position as a very progressive observer, but not quite as much as posterity has seemed to indicate. The rightful high point in this first essay is Schuyler's discussion of Richardson's Marshall Field Wholesale Store of 1885–1887 (Fig. 51). He gave much attention to, but was also quite critical of, Adler & Sullivan's Auditorium (1887–1889) as the outstanding structure derivative from Richardson's example (Figs. 49, 50).⁹⁷ Although his criticism was generally justified, there is so much of it as to suggest that he thought less of the Auditorium than of some of the contemporary buildings by Burnham & Root. This may, however, have been simply because he believed that Root's design represented the more relevant contribution to the continuation of Richardsonian Romanesque, as well as because of his specific wish to memorialize Root.⁹⁸

But why, one may ask, did Schuyler praise the Insurance Building, Rookery, and Phoenix and not the Monadnock, which was at least under way, and possibly just completed, when he visited Chicago? Did Root's masterpiece seem to Schuyler in 1891 "too rudimentary" in its modeling, even though by 1895 the Monadnock had become the critic's favorite building? Or was it simply that in concentrating on Root's work, Schuyler ignored a building which he erroneously attributed to Burnham? The omission is most puzzling. Less puzzling, as will be shortly apparent, and more revealing was Schuyler's complete omission in his essay of 1891 of the great Chicago invention of skeletal framing. If William LeBaron Jenney's elephantine Home Insurance Building (1883–1885) did not catch his eye, why not at least Holabird & Roche's boldly open Tacoma Building, or Bauman & Huehl's Chamber of Commerce Building (both erected in 1888–1889)? An extraordinary blindness for the pioneer commentator on the esthetic

⁹⁷ "Glimpses: Chicago" (1891–D), pp. 257f.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 269f. See also "The Point of View" (1891–A), p. 98.

of the metal cables of Brooklyn Bridge! Even had he disliked these buildings, one would have expected him to have observed the invention and to have pondered its consequences. To Schuyler in 1891, the contribution of the Chicago School was not a new kind of structure but the beginning of a new esthetic which was simply the frank acceptance on the exterior shell of the building of the repetitive cubicles within, of the austerity appropriate to commercial enterprise. And even this esthetic was based on the already waning Richardsonian Romanesque. In reality the contribution of Chicago, as Schuyler appraised it around 1890, was little more than what Boston had earlier created with its warehouse commercial buildings, to recall a comparison which he himself used in the essay.⁹⁹

By 1895 the importance of skeletal framing was too obvious to be ignored, and Schuyler's introduction to his monograph on the work of three Chicago firms—Adler & Sullivan, Burnham & Root, and Henry Ives Cobb—remains the most enlightened contemporaneous account of the mutual impact of skeletal metal framing on Chicago, and of Chicago on skeletal framing. Of all the observations made in these essays, two are especially revealing of Schuyler's ultimate position on the Chicago School. He now considered Burnham & Root's Monadnock Building (1889-1891) to be the best in the city and, indeed, among the finest commercial buildings in the country (Fig. 111). Time has vindicated his judgment. But he deplored the same firm's Reliance Building, begun in 1890 but mostly built c. 1895 (Fig. 107). Here he was less farsighted. In commending the sixteen-story Monadnock, Schuyler praised nearly the last of the tall masonry buildings and the heroic swan song to Richardsonian Romanesque in Chicago. Designed for a conservative Boston client who did not trust the new-fangled Chicago skeletal construction, the height of the masonry bearing-walls required six feet of thickness at ground level, thereby conclusively demonstrating (if such demonstration was needed) that further developments in tall buildings could not be expected from traditional construction. Yet Schuyler was wary of the slightly

⁹⁹ See above, p. 39. On Schuyler's insufficient awareness of structure, see above, p. 26n. It might also be noted that in one of his early articles, "The New Produce Exchange" (1884-D), on George B. Post's New York Produce Exchange (1881-1884), which boasted a revolutionary metal construction just short of Jenney's fully skeletal Home Insurance Building in Chicago, Schuyler never commented on the fact. See Carl Condit, *American Building Art: The Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1960), pp. 44f.

later Reliance Building, erected for a Chicago client, as a mere terra-cotta-sheathed cage of metal and glass.¹⁰⁰ Schuyler remained skeptical of the Reliance throughout his life. Several times he confessed that the finest tall buildings were the transitional buildings pre-dating the full development of metal skeletal construction. Moreover, as late as 1909, he could write that the best tall buildings in the country were the Monadnock, together with George B. Post's Union Trust Building (1889-1890) in New York, and Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge's Ames Building (1889-1893) in Boston, the latter not to be confused with Richardson's work for the same client in the same city (Figs. 111, 118, 38). The Ames Building is second only to the Monadnock as the highest wall-bearing structure in the United States, while the Union Trust is almost positively a wall-bearing structure.¹⁰¹ These preferences must be kept in mind in order to comprehend Schuyler's rather ambiguous position on the skyscraper.

Obviously Schuyler admired these three buildings, all of them among the final salutes to Richardsonian Romanesque, for the sense of the wall which they displayed. Their thick walls, as contrasted to the thin curtains of masonry hung on the outside of the metal frame of the average skyscraper, permitted deep reveals. These in turn provided light and shadow for the wall. Thus the Monadnock possessed a "real wall," with the proportions between wall and window such that the wall maintained its dominance, unlike the transparent Reliance, where the expression of interior volume overrode the sense of exterior mass. Because of this wall thickness, the windows cut deeply into the mass as shaded apertures. Such thickness also meant that the Monadnock wall could be molded by "a series of subtle refinements and nuances that bring out the latent expressiveness of what without them would in truth be as bald as a factory."¹⁰² There was the separa-

¹⁰⁰ *Adler & Sullivan, Burnham, Cobb* (1896-A), pp. 413f.

¹⁰¹ "Evolution of the Skyscraper" (1909-J), p. 436; "The Skyscraper Problem" (1903-D), p. 445. The Ames Building to which Schuyler referred is the third Boston building for the same client: the first, the Ames Kingston and Bedford Street Store (1882); the second, the Harrison Avenue Ames Building (1886). It makes no difference with respect to Schuyler's critical position, but the Union Trust is roughly contemporary with Bradford Gilbert's Tower Building (1888-1889), which traditionally represents the somewhat timid beginning of skeletal construction for New York office buildings. Although George B. Post had used metal in his Produce Exchange, and in some respects more boldly than Gilbert (see above, p. 65n), he and other New York architects do not seem to have followed Gilbert's lead until the nineties.

¹⁰² *Adler & Sullivan, Burnham, Cobb* (1896-A), pp. 410ff, citation p. 411.

tion of the red granite base by the slight inward curve at the bottom of the dark red brick wall above, the clipped corners of the building gusseting the sharp edge as the building rose, the undulation of the office bays as they gently opposed in their swelling the apparent hone of the wall surface, and finally the trumpet flare of the cornice molding. As austere in conception as Richardson's Marshall Field Store and his Chicago houses, Root's tribute to his mentor was nevertheless subtly articulated as, in Schuyler's opinion, the houses were not. In the same manner, had Schuyler happened to write at length on the Union Trust or Ames Buildings, he would surely have praised the recession of their windows behind the planes of decidedly modeled walls.

It followed from his partiality for the wall as mass that he also favored buildings with a solid base, strongly fortified corners, and a decisive cornice. The distinctive treatment of base, corners, and cornice not only permitted a weighty and sculptural building but a unified composition as well. These elements were base, shaft, and capital in the popular column analogy of the period to which Schuyler repeatedly alluded. Such traditionalism was, as he himself admitted, logical (or nearly logical) as an expression of masonry. It was completely illogical for skeletal metal construction, except on such extra-structural grounds as Sullivan developed in his famous "The Tall Building Esthetically Considered," where functional and formal symbolism justify the traditional aspects of his architectural composition. In short, Schuyler never wholly escaped the world of Ruskin, Eidlitz, and Richardson where his esthetic had originated. Eidlitz in fact was specifically concerned with the problem. In his *Nature and Function of Art*, he chided architects who "do not build walls pierced with windows, but design endless windows surrounded by the least modicum of wall that is necessary to sustain the fabric." Where extensive fenestration was needed, as in most commercial building, Eidlitz recommended that reveals be deep in order that depth might serve where breadth had served before. And in his Continental Bank Building in New York (1856), Eidlitz followed his own advice, which was to create a minimal masonry trellis with glass deeply inset—a kind of prefiguration of the esthetic, if not the functional, use of the twentieth-century *brise soleil* (Fig. 25).¹⁰³

¹⁰³ *Nature and Function of Art*, pp. 405f. On Eidlitz's Continental Bank, see "Leopold Eidlitz" (1908-C), pp. 163f.

But Schuyler's esthetic of "fact and reality" compelled him to wrestle with the most challenging architectural problem of his day. What was the outermost position to which he could advance beyond his mentors? Surely not as far as the spindly Reliance. Of this herald of the metal-and-glass schemes of the early twenties and their American realization in the late forties and fifties, Schuyler complained that "if this is the most and best that can be done with the sky-scraper, the sky-scraper is architecturally intractable; and that is a confession that one is loath to make about any system of construction that is mechanically sound. Certainly a comparison between the Reliance and the Monadnock is overwhelmingly in favor of the older building."¹⁰⁴ Thus Schuyler found himself precisely where Ruskin had found himself some thirty-five years earlier, when he had to confess that the Crystal Palace was "real," while preserving his lithic bias by denying that it was "architecture." Schuyler asked the same question of the skyscraper that he had asked of bridges. That is, he was not quite as delighted as selective quotation makes him appear with praising the "thing itself" for itself, as he was interested in starting from this point to ask how the modern reality could become visually satisfying as a "monument."

Since the massive example of Richardson still predominated when Schuyler first visited Chicago, he was the more predisposed toward its buildings. Hence he readily accepted Sullivan's Wainwright Building (1890-1891) in St. Louis, the almost precise contemporary of the only just completed Monadnock (Fig. 104).¹⁰⁵ In fact, it is a bit puzzling to know why Schuyler did not include this building with his three favorites. Like Schuyler, Sullivan approached the full implications of the skeletal frame gingerly. Only in 1899 with the first section of the Carson, Pirie, Scott (originally Schlesinger, Mayer) Department Store, or four years after the completion of the Reliance, did he come to a graphical attenuation of the wall and its bold transparency (Fig. 106). Even here, Sullivan muted the raw exuberance of the faceted sparkle of the Reliance. In contrast to the Reliance, Sullivan emphasized as a plane the terra-cotta reticulation between the glass, while

¹⁰⁴ *Adler & Sullivan, Burnham, Cobb* (1896-A), p. 415. Significantly, Schuyler also protested against the white glazed terra cotta as a material that "would wash." A building without patina doubtless seemed the perverse extension of a building without weight.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 390f. Schuyler protested only against the illogical capitals to the vertical piers immediately under the decorated cornice.

intensifying the sense of window reveal. He thus asserted the presence of a wall—only as a taut membrane containing the space inside to be sure; but a membrane is still a “wall” of sorts, whereas the linearism of the Reliance eliminated all sense of the wall in celebrating the skeleton. Schuyler, however, never mentioned the Carson, Pirie, Scott Store. He was most revealing about two of Sullivan’s buildings intermediate between the lithic reminiscence of the Wainwright and the prophetic weightlessness of the Carson, Pirie, Scott. Writing in 1903, he called the Guaranty Building in Buffalo (1894–1895) and the Bayard (now Condict) Building in New York (1897–1898) the only skyscrapers neither of which was “the simulacrum of a building of masonry,” since each expressed “the idea of a frame building wrapped in a protective envelope of stone or clay” (Figs. 105, 114).¹⁰⁶ Much as he admired them in theory, however, he could not quite embrace them as architecture. In this respect Schuyler’s remarks on the Bayard Building are especially illuminating. “In the expression of the linearity of the steel frame lightly clad in its fireproofing of terra cotta, here was ‘the thing itself,’ a building based on the ‘facts of the case.’” Of course the visual discomfort with which the skyscraper confronted the architectural realist in part remained—the falsity of the treatment of base, cornice, and spandrel panels to the actuality of the frame; but Schuyler had to excuse this, since he could imagine no other approach to the problem. Then he went on to his major criticism:

Not that the gauntness and attenuation of the resulting architecture are in this case altogether agreeable to an eye accustomed to the fictitious massiveness of the conventional treatment. But, at the worst, the front recalls Rufus Choate’s famous toast to the Chief Justice: “We look upon him as the East Indian upon his wooden idol. We know that he is ugly, but we feel that he is great.” We feel that this front is a true and logical exposition of the structure. If we find it ugly notwithstanding, that may be our own fault. If we can find no failure in expressiveness, the architect may retort upon us that it is no uglier than it ought to be.¹⁰⁷

Poor Sullivan! Where so sympathetic a critic was lukewarm to his accomplishment, what could be expected of those less sensitive to architecture? With respect to “gauntness and attenuation,” the

¹⁰⁶ “The Skyscraper Problem” (1903–D), p. 445.

¹⁰⁷ “Skyscraper Up-to-Date” (1899–A), p. 440.

Bayard occupies a middle position between the Monadnock, which Sullivan admired, and the Reliance, which he deplored. The Bayard's moldings and ornament, moreover, increased what Schuyler would have considered the "architectural" quality of the building over and above the utterly naked acceptance of the "facts of the case." And still it remained to him an "ugly" building.

What was Schuyler's solution? Really he had none, but he repeatedly explored the direction in which he believed such a solution might be found. He would resolve the dilemma by so exaggerating the sculptural qualities of the masonry or terra-cotta sheathing hung from the skeleton as to suggest simultaneously the mechanical properties of the frame, the functional characteristics of the building, and the emotional qualities of this new building type adjusted in some manner to what was traditionally valid as architectural composition. He most thoroughly explored this approach in an account of the evolution of the design of the New York Times Building (1902-1904) by Cyrus L. W. Eidlitz (Fig. 116).¹⁰⁸ Despite its prominence, the building has long ago slipped into architectural oblivion, and only its key position in Schuyler's criticism warrants its resurrection here. He found the building's stubby tower, cribbed from the fourteenth-century campanile of the Florence Cathedral, its most meritorious feature. Here Eidlitz exaggerated the bulk of the octagonal corners as vertical piers in marked contrast to the membrane wall between, which he extravagantly opened by windows. In Schuyler's opinion, the piers dramatized the tower as a tower, while the evident thinness of the wall and openness of the fenestration proclaimed the skeleton beneath. The falsifications of the tower "reveal while concealing. In all architecture there is a permissible and artistic exaggeration." Not that Schuyler was wholly satisfied by such fudging of the "facts of the case"; he concluded that the tower could at least serve as a "partial and tentative solution" on the way toward the ideal skyscraper.¹⁰⁹

Schuyler's esthetic of "permissible and artistic exaggeration" was, in fact, very close to Sullivan's esthetic. The two men differed less in philosophy than in the images which their respective philosophies were meant to conjure. Sullivan looked toward the future, without ever (even in the Carson, Pirie, Scott) quite abandoning the past.

¹⁰⁸ "Evolution of a Skyscraper" (1903-E).

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* (pp. 342, 343).

Schuyler turned back nostalgically to the heavy walls, the sculptural effects, and the play of light and shadow sought by Leopold Eidlitz. Nothing could more clearly reveal Schuyler's nostalgia than the manner in which he closed his monograph on Sullivan's work. "No other buildings are more effectively blocked out on the one hand, none so admirably decorated on the other. . . ." Yet a major ingredient was missing. "Between the general composition and the ultimate adornment of the structure there is an intermediate process, the functional modeling of parts to express more forcibly and more minutely the structural relations."¹¹⁰ From our present vantage point we would say that "functional modeling of the parts" is one of the cardinal virtues of Sullivan's mature office buildings (with the possible exception of some aspects of the Guaranty, which was, to be sure, Sullivan's latest major effort when Schuyler wrote these remarks). But Schuyler thought back to the more violently sculptural walls of Victorian Gothic and Richardsonian Romanesque—walls such as Ruskin desired, of "solid stone, broad sunshine, starless shade."¹¹¹ And, as if to reaffirm his nurture in mid-nineteenth-century medievalism, Schuyler closed his essay on Sullivan by noting that precisely this "functional modeling of parts" had accounted for the greater success of European over Asiatic architecture, of Romanesque over Byzantine or Saracenic. Sullivan's sensibility, he thought, was essentially Saracenic.¹¹²

Eventually Schuyler settled for the modeling of the neo-Gothic Woolworth Building (1911–1913) as an ideal compromise between the bones of structure and the flesh of beauty (Fig. 162).¹¹³ This was hardly a discreditable choice, since the Woolworth remains among the finest of New York's skyscrapers in both modeling and mass; but Cass Gilbert was no Louis Sullivan. The Woolworth Building is of the same esthetic order of, although superior to, the Manhattan Bridge. Both are somewhere in the conservative middle, between what Schuyler regarded as the too massive piers of the Brooklyn Bridge and the too attenuated skeleton of the Bayard building.

The most creative criticism involves a three-part challenge. Does the critic possess an esthetic philosophy relevant to the creative produc-

¹¹⁰ *Adler & Sullivan, Burnham, Cobb* (1896–A), pp. 402f.

¹¹¹ Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849), "Lamp of Power," section 23.

¹¹² *Adler & Sullivan, Burnham, Cobb* (1896–A), p. 404.

¹¹³ See below, pp. 83f.

tion of his world? Does his philosophy lead him to the most creative artists and the most significant problems within his world? Finally—and crucial at revolutionary moments in the arts—can his philosophy embrace the new vision, the coming vision, and dare to transform itself in the process of discovery? In rare instances, where the critical vision is boldest, it may so participate in the coming vision as to share in its creation. Schuyler's criticism meets the first two challenges, but not the third. To do this much is to be more the sensitive commentator than the creative critic. Perhaps this is honor enough, since such sensitivity is rare. Far rarer is the ultimate critical sensitivity—not merely a reflector of the present, but a beacon penetrating the future as well.

Because the sensitive commentator is imprisoned in his world, he functions most creatively when the world is going his way. For Schuyler, unfortunately, such was not the case.

One of the signs of incipient Beaux Arts formalism appeared in the seventies as classical details (often incorrect) within that architectural *mélange* known as "Queen Anne." An occasional classical column, a pediment or scroll entablature, the bare suggestion of a Palladian window: these made their reticent appearance within the riotous plasticity and stalwart honesty of Victorian Gothic, and subtly began to transform it. By Victorian Gothic standards, Queen Anne detailing tended to be somewhat dainty in its lightness of scale and rigid in its precise geometries. Psychically, it seems emblematic of the simultaneous emergence of a genteel attitude toward "cultivation" and a hyper-esthetic attitude toward culture, which reached a climax in the bourgeois elegance conveniently labeled Edwardian. In the United States this concern (indeed, over-concern) with cultivation accompanied the beginnings of urban culture, second- and third-generation wealth, and the increasingly important role of women in civic endeavor. As to why the admixture of "Gothic" and "Renaissance" should have been designated "Queen Anne," it was less because of any marked resemblance between the architecture of her reign and that of the nineteenth century than because the two periods shared in common the hybrid moment of a medieval style cautiously venturing into Renaissance classicism. As Schuyler asserted, however, Queen Anne revivalists had drawn from earlier Jacobean and later Georgian sources

as well, and thus "sucked the dregs of the whole English Renaissance." ¹¹⁴

When Schuyler initially published his "Recent Building in New York" in 1883 (reprinted as "Concerning Queen Anne" in *American Architecture* in 1892), the movement was about to be abruptly buried by the avalanche of Richardsonian Romanesque. It merely slumbered, however, to reappear once the avalanche had passed, while in a real sense Richardsonian quiet was the virile counterpart to the decorous plea of Queen Anne adherents for some sort of discipline of the picturesque excess of Victorian Gothic. Schuyler fully realized the effete nature of the movement. "Whoever recalls Viollet-le-Duc's pregnant saying, that 'only primitive sources supply the energy for a long career,' would scarcely select the reign of Queen Anne out of all English history for a point of departure in the history of any one of the plastic arts." He was contemptuous of the "degeneracy" of the wood carving of Grinling Gibbons, by whose work he chose to characterize the reign, "which in execution and all technical qualities are as complete, and in design and all imaginative qualities are as trivial and commonplace" as the "graceful inventions" of the French sculptor Jean Goujon. Far better "the sometimes rude but always purposeful decoration of medieval churches." ¹¹⁵

The opening sections of "Concerning Queen Anne" contain Schuyler's most trenchant criticism of an architecture which forsook "manly and artistic employment" for "elegant trifling" with classical forms merely because these had become fashionable. He attacked all the manifestations of superficial "good taste": wealth squandered on display rather than worth; design fixed by sanction rather than prin-

¹¹⁴ "Recent Building in New York" (1883-B), pp. 455f; the entire essay is reprinted below, pp. 453-487. Elsewhere Schuyler characterized Queen Anne as "the 'free classic' with which Mr. Norman Shaw startled the British islands twenty years ago, and of which Mr. Hudson Holly made himself the literary apostle on this side, the voice of one crying in a wilderness of Victorian Gothic." See *Adler & Sullivan, Burnham, Cobb* (1896-A, p. 184). Henry Hudson Holly (1834-1892), in *Modern Dwellings in Town and Country* (New York, 1878), opens by recommending Queen Anne as developed by Norman Shaw and J. J. Stevenson. He admits the value of Gothic, which he had earlier espoused in his more popular *Holly's Country Seats* (New York, 1866), along with Tudor, Tuscan Bracketed, and various half-timber or chalet derivations. Despite the virtues of Gothic, however, the "free classic" of Queen Anne, with its rectangular windows and doorways is more truthful to modern conditions. He mentions the British pavilion at the Centennial Exposition of 1876 in Philadelphia as an outstanding example of Queen Anne.

¹¹⁵ "Recent Building, New York" (1883-B), pp. 454f.

ciple; culture tied to the past rather than the present. The hybrid quality of Queen Anne "so exclusively centrifugal that it assumes rather the character of an explosion than of an evolution" made it especially sterile.¹¹⁶ He admitted in an offhand manner that the shingle vernacular version of the style had produced interesting work in suburban houses and seaside cottages. Unfortunately he did not consider them. A serious lacuna in his criticism was the rarity of his ventures into suburbia, where some of the most significant American work was under way.¹¹⁷

Although "Concerning Queen Anne" is hostile to the indiscriminate use of classical details, Schuyler's ardent advocacy of the medieval point of view did not drive him to bigotry. Like Eidlitz, he realized that the esthetic of the Greek temple sprang as much from its structure as did that of the medieval cathedral; but, like Eidlitz again, he believed the complexity and variety of medieval styles to be the more adaptable by far to modern building. He was not even above commenting favorably on Renaissance-inspired buildings when the architect had interpreted these forms liberally and logically. He closed his article on New York building around 1883 by appending observations on two buildings which he hoped might counteract the effect of so much error. He commended the stripped Gothic blocks by C. C. Haight for the old campus of Columbia University (Hamilton Hall, 1880, and the Library, completed 1884) and what he termed a "'free Renaissance'" office building by George B. Post, the Post Building, 1881-1883 (Figs. 6, 126, 130).¹¹⁸ From this double recommendation he drew a moral more akin to Viollet-le-Duc's catholic approach to the rational use of diverse past styles than to Eidlitz's partisanship. For architects "who love their art and believe in it," he said:

The point of "departure" is much less important than the point of arrival, and by such architects the historical styles of architecture will be rated according to the help they give in solving the architectural problems of our time. We have seen that an architect who starts from Renaissance architecture and an architect who starts from Gothic architecture, if they faithfully scrutinize their precedents, and faithfully discard such as are inapplicable, in arriving at free architecture will arrive, so far as style is concerned, at much the same result. If this process of analysis were to be

¹¹⁶ "Recent Building, New York" (1883-B), pp. 472, 453.

¹¹⁷ See above, p. 18n.

¹¹⁸ "Recent Building, New York" (1883-B), pp. 478f, 484f.

carried on for a generation, it would be as difficult . . . to trace the sources of English and American architecture as the sources of the composite and living English language, which is adequate to every expression.¹¹⁹

Such broadmindedness permitted Schuyler more indulgence to Beaux Arts buildings than one might expect.

For example, he was very tolerant of the splendor which three members of the Vanderbilt family brought to Fifth Avenue in the late seventies and eighties. The earliest, and best, of the houses, one built (1879–1881) for William K. Vanderbilt, represented Richard Morris Hunt's first important replica of a Loire chateau (Figs. 132, 133). It became the model for similar mansions for American millionaires until Hunt himself climaxed the development with his fabulous Biltmore (1890–1895) near Asheville, North Carolina, for George Washington Vanderbilt, younger brother of William (Fig. 152). Since the Loire chateaux also represented the amalgam of medieval becoming classic, but with the classicism far more dominant than in American Queen Anne, it was appropriate that "The Vanderbilt Houses" followed "Concerning Queen Anne" in *American Architecture*.¹²⁰ The second mansion considered in the essay, Cornelius Vanderbilt's Fifth Avenue chateau (1880–1894) by George B. Post, represented a somewhat later and still more classicistic phase of the chateau development than had Hunt's initial design (Figs. 134, 135). Of the other two Vanderbilt houses on Fifth Avenue, both designed (1880–1884) by the decorating firm of Herter Brothers for W. H. Vanderbilt in what is perhaps best termed Queen Anne crossed with Parisian Second Empire Renaissance, the less said the better (Figs. 136, 137, 138). Schuyler made no generalizations of critical import about any of the houses discussed in the essay. Instead he is seen to admirable advantage in a favorite role, the architectural boulevardier strolling the avenue and urbanely discussing those aspects of the building which it presents to the passer-by—the massing, the fenestration, the use and effectiveness of ornament. And on the whole, despite strictures of detail, he was favorably impressed, except by the Herter houses, where he considered the iron fencing superior to what it inclosed.

The same sense of Schuyler's strolling past buildings (or rather photographs of them) without troubling to examine plan or interior appears in his lengthy essay on Hunt's entire career. "The Works of

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 486f.

¹²⁰ "The Vanderbilt Houses" (1882–A), pp. 488–501.

the Late Richard M. Hunt"¹²¹ is therefore somewhat superficial, and would be more so if, despite some excellent planning in early works especially, the picturesque handling of the mass was not in fact a central concern in Hunt's esthetic. Given Schuyler's convictions, his laudatory comments are admittedly irresponsible, although Hunt's position as the dean of his profession doubtless inclined Schuyler to leniency. But there may also have been a positive aspect to Schuyler's predisposition toward work so much opposed to his convictions. He sensed (although he never made as much of the fact as he should have) an element of vigorous improvisation in Hunt's work, a bit crude perhaps but lustily creative, which gave it qualities akin to the force of the man himself and the bravura of a clientele at best barely freed of the most buccaneering aspects of moneymaking.

In respect to the vitality of Hunt's picturesque vision, Schuyler's remarks on the temper of the École when Hunt became its first American *nouveau* in the early fifties are of some significance. During this decade especially, and to a lesser extent in the sixties when Richardson became the second American to attend, the École felt the influence of the so-called Néo-Grec movement led by Henri Labrouste, but including as well architects like Joseph Louis Duc and J.-F. Duban.¹²² As Gothic rationalism dominated English and American attempts to found a "real" architecture in which structure and function called forth an "organic" esthetic, Néo-Grec architects sought an equivalent "reality" from classical forms. Occasionally they attempted to utilize iron and other new materials in a manner which they hopefully believed the Greeks might have used had they enjoyed the advantages of nineteenth-century technology. This is not to say that Néo-Grec was wholly a structural esthetic, even to the degree on which Néo-Gothic prided itself in its structuralism. Its adherents certainly used Renaissance massing, as, for example, Hunt did in his Lenox Library, 1870-1875, (Fig. 145). Here, however, the applied decoration is more severe than Renaissance ornament, with extensive flat surfaces, while visually, if not actually, the decorative articulation of the wall is structurally

¹²¹ "The Works of the Late Richard M. Hunt" (1895-B), pp. 502-555.

¹²² On Néo-Grec and its practitioners, see, for example, Siegfried Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, Mass., 1954). See also Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Modern Architecture, Romanticism and Reintegration* (New York, 1929), chap. 3, where his treatment of this movement is clearer and more compact than in his later and more ambitious survey of modern architecture.

inspired. Hunt's Lenox Library is in fact *plus Néo-Grec que les Néo-Grecs même*. Its only specifically "Greek" elements are the pediments; but the stocky pilasters "supporting" the pediments, the flat rustication at the base of the building, and, above all, the window treatment (lifted from Duban's Seine front of the École des Beaux Arts of 1860-1862) are all part of the Néo-Grec milieu.¹²³

Schuyler sensed that Hunt's early work contained a mixture of Néo-Grec ideals, which he had imbibed in France, with those of Victorian Gothic. Meanwhile, the two kinds of rationalism were adulterated by a frank joy in a pictorial extravagance which was its own justification and grew with the growing affluence of Hunt's clientele. Hunt's entire career represented a careless quest whereby he reconciled pragmatically the conflicting influences of his training and environment. This theme, which Schuyler mentioned rather than analyzed, doubtless made him more sympathetic with his subject than one might have expected, while it also may have encouraged a reckless abandoning of his critical responsibility in the face of the festive extravagance of this architecture. So sensitive was Schuyler to the vitality in Hunt's work, and so aware of the conflicting esthetics which a pragmatic point of view confidently overrode, that this essay remains one of his best—ironically, perhaps the finest of his long articles on the careers of single architects, despite his greater sympathy for the work of other men. What the essay lacks as architectural criticism in its leniency to Hunt, it gains as a commentary on architectural taste. Probably no contemporary document provides so admirable a case study of the American architectural transformation from the medieval-inspired picturesque esthetic of the mid-nineteenth century to the Renaissance-inspired Beaux Arts at its end. Hunt provides the perfect introduction to this "Renaissance," since it retained much more interest in picturesque variety and much less interest in abstract geometrical order than its adherents liked to pretend.

In the course of his imaginary stroll past Hunt's mélange of jagged profiles and classical detail, Schuyler frequently surprises a generation brought up to be contemptuous of such scenographic rambunctiousness. For example, he even encourages a fresh look at Hunt's dome dominating the Court of Honor at the Chicago Columbian Exposition of 1893,

¹²³ John Jacobus provided these observations. See also the Tenth Street Studios, p. 508 below.

as admired at the time as it has been maligned since (Fig. 154). He reminds us of the "alert and bristling" quality of this fanciful reincarnation of Brunelleschi's climax for the Florence Cathedral. Although the base of the Fair's Administration Building was too open, and hence visually too feeble for what was on top, Schuyler, with some reason, found the "really soaring" dome, so long as it was not profoundly examined, "'a noble, festal, glittering, shapely bulk in white and gold' . . . one of the chief triumphs of modern academic architecture."¹²⁴

In his essay on the Exposition as a whole, however, Schuyler achieved one of his critical masterpieces—a taut, balanced, decisive critique that is possibly the best thing he ever wrote.¹²⁵ He praised the classicistic architecture of the Court of Honor in three respects. It achieved unity, magnitude, and illusion, all of which were desirable qualities for a fair. As for unity, the common style permitted group design, while the canonical authority of the style sustained even the weakest building within the ensemble. With respect to magnitude, the unity of the Court of Honor gave a grandeur which a scattering of miscellaneous buildings could never have achieved. The grandeur was intensified by the scale of the base moldings as measures of human height against the stately rise of the colonnades. Finally, with respect to the quality of illusion, Schuyler made his most telling point about the fair: it should be frankly enjoyed for what it was. "Those of us who believe that architecture is the correlation of structure and function, that if it is to be real and living and progressive, its forms must be the results of material and construction, sometimes find ourselves reproached with our admiration for these palaces in which this belief is so conspicuously ignored and set at naught." To value the fair for itself, as a temporary and festive stage set appropriate to its occasion as "the most integral, the most extensive, the most illusive piece of scenic architecture that has ever been seen" seemed quite legitimate to Schuyler. To laud it as a model for serious architecture or city planning, on the other hand, would be disastrous, since modern architecture and cities must not build "illusions or imitations but realities, organisms like those in nature."¹²⁶ "Last Words about the Fair" was indeed the last word

¹²⁴ "Richard M. Hunt" (1895-B), pp. 546, 532.

¹²⁵ "Last Words About the Fair" (1894-A), pp. 556-574.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 573, 572, 574.

on the subject. From his day to ours, no one has better comprehended the contribution of the White City, nor its deficiencies.

The triumph of the Beaux Arts—heralded as early as 1875 with the popular success of Hunt's Lenox Library for New York, but sealed with the spectacle of the White City—inaugurated an architectural reign with which Schuyler was fundamentally unsympathetic, although he was duty-bound as a journalistic critic to review it. Perfunctory for the most part, his criticisms of Beaux Arts buildings hardly merit resurrection. They consisted largely in evaluations of whether this arrangement of Renaissance details "composed" better than that, with some pretense that certain compositions appeared more "organic" than others. In short, he made the best of what was presented, with occasional regrets that the best had so little relevance to what he regarded as good. Perhaps to escape this meaningless game of moving architectural counters over elevations, he turned increasingly retrospective, writing just before and after 1900 many pieces on the men, the works, and the ideals of the seventies, eighties, and early nineties, when American architecture had held much promise for him. Much of his writing goes beyond retrospection to become more overtly historical. Of his historical essays, possibly the most venturesome at the time was his exploration of the early nineteenth-century Greek Revival in America, and the most lastingly significant, his accounts of the development of the New York house from the eighteenth century to his own day.¹²⁷

What he really felt about the Beaux Arts appeared, covertly and devastatingly, as an anonymous spoof in 1897. In the guise of a letter to the editor, signed "A Classic," Schuyler addressed the profession under the heading "A Long-Felt Want":¹²⁸

This is a time of eager competition, and in order that an architect may live it is absolutely necessary that he should spend most of his time

¹²⁷ On the Greek Revival, see "The Old 'Greek Revival'" (1910-K). On the New York house, "The Small City House in New York" (1899-B); Schuyler's historical study of the New York house, supplemented by his observations on developments throughout his lifetime, make this series especially valuable: "Recent Building, New York" (1883-B), "The New New York House" (1906-C), and "New New York Houses, East Side" (1911-J).

¹²⁸ "A Long-Felt Want" (1897-E), pp. 579-582; "Architecture Made Easy" (1897-F), pp. 583-587. Citations *passim*. On the peculiarly important role of neoclassicism in the United States, see H.-R. Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, chap. 24, and William H. Jordy, "Formal Image: U.S.A.," *Architectural Review*, 127 (Mar. 1960), pp. 157-165.

in looking out for profitable work. If you pardon the vulgar expression, he must "hustle for a living." If he stays in his office, in the old-fashioned way, and puts in his time in supervising the work of his draftsmen, he is sure to fall behind. More than that, if he has any important work on hand, his time is taken up in conversation and correspondence with a host of contractors and material men. . . . For professional purposes every hour that he spends over the drawing-board is lost to him. To a busy architect nothing can be more ridiculous than the clamor of ignorant laymen for an "original style of architecture," as if he had nothing else to think about than design. . . . If he devoted his time to design he would have nothing to design; and what good would his designs do anyway?

Confronting the dilemma of "hustle"—getting the commissions, keeping appointments, and pushing to meet building schedules—what could the "busy architect" do? He could turn to the "classic formulas . . . the greatest labor saving devices of which the history of architecture gives any account." With these, "having laid out his building and designated the style, he can take a trip to Europe and leave the detail to the boys." The fatal flaw in the classic formulae, however, was the matter of the placement, scale, and proportion of the detail. Much time could be wasted on such adjustments, only to find that the building did not "look right" when completed. Perhaps some one could devise a system according to which such adjustments could be made automatically by the draftsman, "under the title, say, of 'Modern Architecture Focussed.'" Not that "A Classic" could himself devise such a system. "I am not a scientific man. I am an artist."

Between one issue of the *Record* and the next the spoof had grown. The editors announced that they would violate policy by publishing an announcement received from a commercial firm because of its unusual interest. With the slogan "YOU GET THE JOB, WE DO THE REST" the Classic Design and Detail Company got to the nub of the problems of the "busy architect." Both time and profit went into the drafting room. Why not therefore eliminate the individual drafting room for the corporate drafting room of the Classic Design and Detail Company? Having obtained his commission, the architect only needed to draw a crude sketch of the massing he desired, together with a notation of the classical details he wished applied. So that he might have the widest possible choice in his detailing, the vast archaeological collections of the company were constantly refreshed by the latest Beaux Arts designs supplied by Paris agents. With minimal instruc-

tions from the architect, then, Classic Design would "do the rest," and in accordance with a scientific system which guaranteed correct proportion and scale. Behind the spoof, one feels the reverberations of Eidlitz's contemptuous snort when chided for his inability to design a Corinthian capital. "DESIGN!"—by the mid-nineties Eidlitz's exclamation had acquired new relevance.¹²⁹

This anonymous satire toward the end of the nineties marked a turning point in Schuyler's criticism. In effect it represented his final gesture of defiance at the triumphant Beaux Arts esthetic. He had already bowed to its inevitability. Thereafter, although he sniped at its ideals wherever he could, never again did he attack it substantially. With his resignation to the inevitability of what he deplored, Schuyler's criticism lost much of its early bite. The sharp wit—what Baudelaire termed the "bilious" quality of all great criticism—disappeared in genial but discontented compromise. It flared only fitfully, most often in articles discussing the past, a time when to Schuyler the future had seemed so full of promise.

Of Schuyler's essays on the classicistic aspects of Beaux Arts, only two are worth mentioning, and in conjunction with these the fragment of a third. The fragment is a discussion of the Bank for Savings (1894) in New York by Cyrus Eidlitz.¹³⁰ Devoid of classical detail, this building, insofar as it could be tagged at all, was a free and individualistic version of Romanesque forms. But, writing in 1896, just as Beaux Arts ideals were gathering full momentum, Schuyler praised (indeed over-praised) the junior Eidlitz's building as the most classical structure among recent New York buildings. He could think of no other which gave "quite the same sense of lucidity and purity, of precision and 'just rightness.' "

And it is especially to be noted this result has been attained in a building in which the design is the exposition of the structure, in which none of the forms are borrowed from the antique, in which the detail is original, and which is an example of Romanesque. To attain in free architecture the distinction of classical architecture, to gain purity without losing expressiveness is a rare, if not a unique achievement in contemporary work.

In short, a classical architecture depended on certain formal ideals, not on literal details.

¹²⁹ See above, p. 22.

¹³⁰ "Cyrus L. W. Eidlitz" (1896-B, p. 428 for the citation below).

This creative quest for the spirit of classical buildings—Richardson's ideal of "quiet"—was, however, engulfed by a more imitative ideal. Of all the classicistic Beaux Arts buildings which he reviewed, Schuyler praised three especially: the façade of the New York Stock Exchange (1902-1903), a bank for the Knickerbocker Trust Company in New York (1902-1904), and Cullum Hall at the West Point Military Academy (1895-1898)—the first by George Post, the others by McKim, Mead & White (Figs. 156, 157, 160).¹³¹ Significantly, he viewed them all as examples of Néo-Grec. In this context, his was a private use of the label, without historical validation in the architectural movement of the middle of the nineteenth century. Schuyler used the term merely to indicate that in these buildings classicistic components and details were either actually or symbolically structural. His comments on the bank for the Knickerbocker Trust, the detailing of which was more Renaissance than Greek, are especially interesting. As Schuyler confessed, the building had its faults, especially the scale of the entrance, too casually wedged within the colonnade, and the somewhat top-heavy and overelaborated cornice. Yet the Knickerbocker Trust held some, if only desperate, promise as well.

It is by no means often that a modern architect has a project which will allow itself to be simplified to the Greek construction, and in which a single system of uprights and cross pieces can be made the whole visible structure of the modern building. When that exceptionally happens, the most convinced medievalist or modernist can hardly cavil at the adoption of the "order," in which that construction was once and for all so beautifully developed and expressed that no construction more complicated has attained an equal perfection. A case is clearly made out for classicism when the architect can employ the order as the structure, instead of reducing it to the place of a superficial decoration, or of taking it apart and undertaking to reassemble its elements in other connections than that for which they were devised.¹³²

Unfortunately for a classicistic architecture of "fact and reality," as Schuyler himself admitted in his too literalistic view of the dilemma, the Greek ideal only rarely encountered the two- or three-story building with a monumental interior which made it possible for modern archi-

¹³¹ On the Stock Exchange, see "The New York Stock Exchange" (1902-D). On the Knickerbocker Trust, see "A 'Modern Classic'" (1904-C), pp. 588-597.

¹³² *Ibid.*, pp. 591f.

ecture. His own Néo-Grec promised at best an occasional oasis in the desert of pictorial classicism.

Schuyler hoped for more from medieval veneers. He sighed that Victorian Gothic had waned before the skyscraper appeared, while in 1913 he praised the newly completed Woolworth Building as the finest tower in New York.¹³³ His praise was justifiable provided one forgets the modest Bayard and, considering the excellence of so much more grandiose an undertaking, doubtless justified even if Sullivan's building is included. (Figs. 162, 114.) Schuyler lauded the Woolworth for the pier-and-spandrel treatment of the wall, which Sullivan had made famous. For Schuyler it revealed the skeletal nature of the building and celebrated its verticality. Moreover, Schuyler appreciated the massing of the Woolworth—as set-back massing, matched in expressive power among New York skyscrapers only by that of Howells & Hood's Daily News Building (1929-1931)—so that the tower soared free of its base of lower stories. Finally, he commended the terracotta ornament, not for its "Gothic" recall, but for its adjustment so as to clarify the building mass, as well as for its scale, modeling, and color, which made even the topmost trefoils legible from the ground. Far be it, he added wistfully, that his essay should resurrect the old battle of the styles, "But one can hardly refrain from asking himself whether a success comparable with that of the largest and greatest of our skyscrapers can be attained within the repertory of our Parisianized architecture." ¹³⁴

Reprinting this essay in another version as a brochure, presumably for publicity purposes, Schuyler went so far as to confuse Sullivan's functional theory with Gilbert's style, intermingling the two. "One might take [the Woolworth] as the subject of a lecture on Mr. Sullivan's text: 'where function does not vary, form does not vary.'" By such a twist of meaning Schuyler sought to unify his disparate support of Sullivan's "reality" of skeletal framing on the one hand, and Gilbert's "reality" of the tangible wall on the other. He was doubtless unmind-

¹³³ "The Towers of Manhattan and Notes on the Woolworth Building" (1913-A); *The Woolworth Building* (1914-A), pp. 605-621. In "The Towers of Manhattan" Schuyler compared the Woolworth tower with those of the New York Times, Singer, Bankers Trust, Metropolitan Life, and Municipal Buildings, which he considered to be the most distinguished among New York towers. This essay may be instructively compared to his earlier Chicago essays, "Glimpses: Chicago" (1891-D) and *Adler & Sullivan, Burnham, Cobb* (1896-A).

¹³⁴ "The Towers of Manhattan" (1913-A, p. 114).

ful of the essay Sullivan himself had written in 1905 excoriating modern Gothic as a baseless substitute for a truly organic architecture.¹³⁵

Finally, the other Beaux Arts Gothic building which Schuyler particularly admired was a masterpiece of the leading neomedievalists of the period. Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson's St. Thomas' Church (1911-1913) in New York revealed the same ornamental articulation both of structure and compositional elements as the Woolworth Building, while boasting a manipulation of light and shade far superior to any permitted by the regularities of a skyscraper (Fig. 161). In 1911, three years after his three-part article on Eidlitz, Schuyler honored Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson in an article running all of 111 pages in the *Record*.¹³⁶ How insidious to his cause was the shift from the earlier to the later Gothic, which Schuyler was either unaware of or tactfully silent about!

Scholarship, at any rate, was from the first the "note" of the Gothic of Messrs. Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson, the cultivated sensibility that enabled the designer to choose from the enormous repertory available to him what suited his particular purpose, and the artistic tact of adjusting the chosen forms to that purpose. The scholarship by no means precluded invention and originality—real scholarship never does; but it kept them, even in the freshest and most venturesomely picturesque of the earliest works from infringing upon the congruity or impairing the unity of the work.

Gone was the virility of Eidlitz's "wherever in Gothic two stones come together, there is architecture." In its stead, "scholarship" and "cultivated sensibility" drew from an "enormous repertory" to compose the building with "artistic tact."

The fault lay in part with the stars, but in large part with Schuyler himself. The polite world of the New York *littérateur* smothered the critic which Schuyler might have been. Very rarely did the most creative work of the period penetrate his well insulated environment. Exceptions were Louis Sullivan's People's Savings Bank (1911) in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and the German Wasmuth publications in 1910 and 1911 of Frank Lloyd Wright's prairie style, cornerstones of his

¹³⁵ *The Woolworth Building*, (1914-A), p. 617. For Sullivan on Beaux Arts neo-Gothic, see "Reply to Mr. Frederick Stymetz Lamb on 'Modern Use of the Gothic; The Possibility of a New Architectural Style,'" *Craftsman*, 8 (June 1905), 336-338.

¹³⁶ "Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson" (1911-A, p. 45 for the citation below). See also "The New St. Thomas's Church, New York" (1913-B), pp. 598-604.

European reputation. Schuyler discussed both subjects in essays published just two years before his death.

He perceived that the exterior mass of the Cedar Rapids bank took its shape directly from the interior space and, more than in any other of his essays, he discussed this building from the inside out (Figs. 164, 165).¹³⁷ The low-ceilinged space around the periphery of the building which housed behind-the-counter activities was stepped up at the center to permit a clerestory over the nuclear public space. Schuyler praised in detail the sumptuous materials of the interior, their combination and their craftsmanship. Here Sullivan allowed these qualities largely to speak for themselves by using plain surfaces and right-angled edges while making only reticent use of his famed ornament. The clarity of these components enhanced the openness of the space. To step into it was to "see through it from end to end and from side to side" and to sense how directly "provision is made for every function, but expression given to every provision." And yet—the same old complaint—Schuyler was put off by the plainness and abruptness of the handling. Perhaps, in this instance particularly, a few of his indictments can stand. If the objectionable plainness of Sullivan's handling in the interior was considerably redeemed by sumptuousness of materials, it went unmitigated on the severe brick walls of the exterior. Sharply cut windows, no cornice, no moldings, little ornament: again Schuyler called for "functional modeling," partly practical and partly rhetorical in its implications.

A few months later he had the same reservations about Wright's work. Schuyler's review of the Wasmuth volume as a feature article for the *Record* serves as a fitting *envoi* to his career, the more so as he introduced his review by relating Wright's work to the long tradition of "organicism" and "reality" from which both Wright and he had drawn.¹³⁸ Here was "a growth and not a compilation. Every one of [the houses] shows that power of simplification and unification which was the essential gift of Richardson. . . ." They were "organic wholes." Schuyler deserved the gratitude which Wright expressed two years later, perhaps as a memorial tribute, in the second part of his famous

¹³⁷ "The People's Savings Bank of Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Louis Sullivan, Architect" (1912-A), pp. 624-633, citation on p. 630.

¹³⁸ "An Architectural Pioneer, Review of the Portfolios Containing the Works of Frank Lloyd Wright" (1912-D), pp. 634-640. The two portfolios were both published in Berlin by Wasmuth in 1910 and 1911.

two-part essay, "In the Cause of Architecture," published only a short time after Schuyler's death. Yet, Schuyler insisted for one last time, "Those functional modifications of surface or line, commonly by means of mouldings, to firm a footing, to emphasize a division, or to soften or sharpen a transition, to mark a projection or a recess . . . are here almost altogether absent, nor can their place be supplied, as to the artistic result, by decoration strictly and properly so called." The defect of the houses, he felt, was the defect of contemporary Mission furniture. "The stark unmodeled transitions give an air of something rude, incomplete, unfinished. The buildings seemed 'blocked out,' and awaiting completion rather than completed."¹³⁹ Again the criticism of the piers of Brooklyn Bridge, Richardson's Chicago houses, McKim, Mead & White's Baltimore church, and much of Sullivan's work. Again the recognition that the buildings were admirably "real" but, like the Bayard Building, somehow ugly. Again Schuyler's enthusiasm is tempered by reservations born of the past. He concluded that Sullivan and Wright "have the root of the matter." Their works were "of good hope, in contrast with the rehandling and rehashing of admired historical forms in which there is no future nor any possibility of progress."¹⁴⁰ Sound to be sure; but where did this leave Schuyler? Opposed to the success of his day, vaguely uncertain about the iconoclasts, Schuyler neither belonged to the present that engulfed him, nor could he quite enter the future just emerging.

Under the circumstances, Mumford's assertion—casually made in any event—is not quite correct. That Schuyler "never pulled down the flag" asserts both too much and too little about his career. It goes too far by inferring a clarity of vision which he did not possess. The work of both Wright and Sullivan, holding the "good hope" of the future, cried for his serious attention, not for tangential comment. So did the work of such pioneers as the Greene brothers, Irving Gill, Bernard Maybeck, and the Chicago architects working around Wright, none of whom found his support, although enough of the work of all of them had been published and should have caught the attention of an adventurous critic of his convictions. Developments in garden city planning also should have attracted his notice. Finally, his specific awareness of European modernism¹⁴¹ should have whetted his curiosity.

¹³⁹ "An Architectural Pioneer" (1912-D), pp. 637f, 639f.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 640.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 634, with respect to the publication of Wright's work in Germany, Schuyler

Instead he junketed to Mexico City, Hawaii, the Philippines, and when he went to France, he visited Mont St. Michel, and in Paris strolled past the houses of the *haut monde* as he had repeatedly toured New York's residential districts.¹⁴² Hindsight doubtless maps too pat a course for Schuyler. Yet, after all the excuses are made, we must face the fact that the final two decades of Schuyler's career reveal him as a provincial cosmopolite, benign, lively, enlightened, but too lethargically inclined to use the critical capital accumulated in his youth.

If in one sense Mumford's assertion says too much, in another it says too little. By suggesting Schuyler's infallibility, it stereotypes a career whose interest is relative to the light it sheds on the dilemmas of its time, rather than to its absolute perspicacity.

"Organicism" and "reality" were the key concepts in Schuyler's point of view. Widespread in nineteenth-century architectural theory, this tradition of organic reality was most fully elaborated in theory and exemplified in practice in the Anglo-American world, while it steadily becomes more apparent that it received its most significant architectural embodiment in the United States from the 1840s through World War I. What Vincent Scully has termed the "stick style" of the fifties and sixties, the "shingle style" (Scully again) of the seventies and eighties,¹⁴³ the work of Richardson, Sullivan, and Wright and some of his California contemporaries: this entire American development depended on the tradition of organic reality—and so, substantially, did the Chicago School, although organicism was less important for the bare-bones skyscraper than realism.

As an empirical attitude toward action and experience rather than a meticulously formulated esthetic, the tradition defies narrow definition. Its aims, however, can be loosely summarized as individualism, tangibility, and articulation. Individualism meant maximum freedom. The designer was untrammelled by formulae and schools. Each building presented a unique problem requiring unique confrontation. Tangibility meant physical presence. The building partook of the earth, weighing on it and expanding to it. Its materials, familiar in

stated, "At present Germany is more hospitable to new artistic ideas, at least to ideas which pertain to architecture and decoration, than either France or England."

¹⁴² See "Our Acquired Architecture" (1900-A), "Nouveautés de Paris" (1901-A), "Mont St. Michel: Architectural Days No. 1" (1902-A), "The Architecture of Mexico City. Part I. Ancient" (1912-G), "The Architecture of Mexico City. Part II. Modern" (1912-I).

¹⁴³ Vincent Scully, "Romantic Rationalism and the Expression of Structure in Wood," *Art Bulletin*, 34 (June 1953), 121-142, and *The Shingle Style*.

nature, directly appeared in the building, welcoming sunlight, shadow, and weather. And like all palpable things, the building existed as an entity, either through forceful boundaries or through a heart-mass from which dependencies exfoliated in an irregular silhouette blending with the surroundings. Articulation meant maximum revelation. Both plan and structure must be legible. Composition and ornament, dependent directly on these, should increase this legibility. The realization of these three aims, in turn, demanded a picturesque vision, defined by Carroll Meeks as delight in forms providing variety, movement, irregularity, intricacy, and roughness.¹⁴⁴ Finally, to complete the requirements for any esthetic, the aims and vision found reinforcement in two kinds of illustration. Nature as empirically experienced in everyday encounter¹⁴⁵ provided cosmic reinforcement for the esthetic; medieval architecture provided historical precedent.

Schuyler played a significant role within this tradition of organic reality central to the American development. His own criticism can be dissected into a three-part dialectic illuminating, not only his own career, but as well the development he recorded. First, there was his progressive eclecticism, which held that the new would gradually emerge from medieval forms properly reappraised and extended. Second, there was his radical rationalism, which impatiently threw off the hobbles of gradualism to rush toward modernity by accepting the stark consequences of whatever the future would bring. But finally, there was his picturesque inheritance, demanding a sculptural quality to both mass and structural components. This inheritance encouraged retreat from the full consequences of what his radical rationalism disclosed. In a way, this gradualism, the impatient thrust, the retreat—now so clear-sighted, again so confused—epitomizes the entire development in progressive American architecture from 1840 to World War I. After all, even its boldest creators, Sullivan and Wright, never really abandoned the aims of individualism, tangibility, and articulation marked out by their tradition.

Yet these aims were being challenged when Schuyler wrote. The ideal of the elaborate articulation demanded by neomedieval theories

¹⁴⁴ Carroll V. L. Meeks, *The Railroad Station* (New Haven, 1956), pp. 4-7.

¹⁴⁵ Nature "as empirically experienced in everyday encounter" is an important qualification, since organic theories have also been based on an abstract order kinesthetically experienced; see, for example, Sir Geoffrey Scott, *The Architecture of Humanism*, 1st ed. (London, 1914), chap. 8. Although both Eidlitz and Schuyler were not unaware of this latter position, clearly an empirical, naturalistic bias dominated their architectural philosophies.

of architectural reality was subtly undermined by some of the very architects whose philosophies most nearly coincided with Schuyler's. Thus Schuyler found excessive the bluntness of some of the forms of Richardson, Sullivan, and Wright. Even an English critic of the period writing of the shingle style houses could say of Richardson's influence that "his tendency to revert to primitive conditions of building has left a very decided mark on modern American house architecture."

A house has come to be regarded by many American architects . . . as a superior shed, strongly built and divided into as many compartments as are necessary, but defiantly ignoring everything like what is usually called architectural detail. Walls and roof only, taking the form suggested by the planning of the compartments, but devoid of any architectural expression except what may arise from this grouping.¹⁴⁶

Above all, however, the implications of the skyscraper proved devastating to Schuyler's architectural ideals. Schuyler himself was uncomfortably aware that the skyscraper substantially challenged all the major tenets of his philosophy: individualism and tangibility certainly, and articulation as well, at least as it was traditionally understood.

The reconciliation of this new knowledge with a radically new vision was the mission of Continental modernism in the early twentieth century. Surely, in the creation of a fully modern architecture, the Continental development was the step which had to be taken beyond the tradition of organic reality, its aims, its visual preferences, its examples, and its symbolism. But since World War II, modern architecture has come back to the ideals of individuality, tangibility, and articulation,¹⁴⁷ and to a renewed interest in history, which reintroduces the dilemmas of creative eclecticism as well. Today Schuyler's criticism assumes new relevance. Where it failed in particulars—because the crudities of the architecture of good hope he favored were only circumvented by the superficialities of the architecture of good taste he abhorred—his "point of view" retains its vigor. And so does its underlying premise: "It is more feasible to tame exuberances than to create a soul under the ribs of death."¹⁴⁸ Could it be that the critic for a lost cause will become the prophet for a new one?

¹⁴⁶ H. Heathcote Statham, *Modern Architecture* (London and New York, 1898), p. 220. Statham was at the time the editor of the English professional journal, *The Builder*.

¹⁴⁷ Compare, for example, the Schuyler-Eidlitz point of view with that of Louis Kahn. See William H. Jordy, "Medical Research Building for Pennsylvania University, Philadelphia," *Architectural Review*, 129 (Feb. 1961), 98-106. Jan C. Rowan, "Wanting to Be . . . The Philadelphia School," *Progressive Architecture* 42 (Apr. 1961), 130-163.

¹⁴⁸ "Glimpses: St. Paul and Minneapolis" (1891-E), p. 328.

AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE

and Other Writings

by

MONTGOMERY SCHUYLER

I. The Point of View

The Point of View¹

The connection between the papers here collected, in addition to their common subject-matter, is their common point of view. Of this I do not know that I can make a clearer or briefer statement than I made in a speech delivered, in response to the toast of "Architecture," at the fifth annual banquet of the National Association of Builders, given February 12, 1891, at the Lenox Lyceum, in New York.² Accordingly I reprint here the report of my remarks:

"Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the National Association of Builders,—You will not expect from me, in responding to this toast, any exhibition of that facetious spirit with which some of my predecessors have entertained you. It has, indeed, been said that American humor has never found full expression except in architecture. It has also been said by an honored friend of mine, himself an architect, whom I hoped to see here to-night, that American architecture was the art of covering one thing with another thing to imitate a third thing, which, if genuine, would not be desirable.³ But I hope you will agree with me that, though the expression is comic, the fact, so far as it is a fact, is serious even to sadness. It is a great pleasure and a great privilege for me to speak to this sentiment, and it is especially a privilege for me to

¹ *Inland Architect and News Record*, 17 (Feb. 1891), 5-6. Reprinted as the first essay in *American Architecture* (1892), pp. 1-5. Reproduced in full.

² The address was given at a final banquet meeting of the week-long convention of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the National Association of Builders; see *The New York Times*, Feb. 13, 1891, p. 2. Ex-President Grover Cleveland was the principal speaker, followed by Montgomery Schuyler. The menu, incidentally, was stamped on terra-cotta plaques.

³ The statement is Leopold Eidlitz's; see below, p. 187.

speak upon it to an association of builders, because it seems to me that the real, radical defect of modern architecture in general, if not of American architecture in particular, is the estrangement between architecture and building—between the poetry and the prose, so to speak, of the art of building, which can never be disjoined without injury to both. If you look into any dictionary or into any cyclopædia under ‘architecture,’ you will find that it is the art of building; but I don’t think that you would arrive at that definition from an inspection of the streets of any modern city. I think, on the contrary, that if you were to scrape down to the face of the main wall of the buildings of these streets, you would find that you had simply removed all the architecture, and that you had left the buildings as good as ever; that is to say, the buildings in which the definition I have quoted is illustrated are in the minority, and the buildings of which I have just spoken are in the majority; and the more architectural pretensions the building has, the more apt it is to illustrate this defect of which I have spoken.

“It is, I believe, historically true, in the history of the world, with one conspicuous exception, that down to the Italian Renaissance, some four centuries ago, the architect was himself a builder. The exception is the classical period in Rome. The Grecian builders, as all of you know, had taken the simplest possible construction, that of the post and lintel, two uprights carrying a crossbeam, and they had developed that into a refined and beautiful thing. The Romans admired that, and they wished to reproduce it in their own buildings, but the construction of their own buildings was an arched construction; it was a wall pierced with arches. They did not develop that construction into what it might have been. They simply pierced their wall with arches and overlaid it with an envelope of the artistic expression of another construction, which they coarsened in the process. According to some accounts, they hired Greek decorators to overlay it with this architecture which had nothing to do with it, and there was the first illustration in all history of this difference between the art of architecture and the art of building. In every other country in the world the architect had been the builder. I think that is true down to the Italian Renaissance; and then building was really a lost art. There hadn’t been anything really built in the fifteenth century; and they began to employ general artists, painters and sculptors and goldsmiths, to design their buildings, and these men had no models before them except this Grecian-Roman architecture

of which I speak.* These men reproduced that in their designs, and left the builder to construct it the best way he could, and that, I am told, is a process which sometimes prevails in the present time. But before that everything had been a simple development of the construction and the material of the building, and since that men have thought they perceived that architecture was one thing and building was another, and they have gone on to design buildings without any sort of reference to the materials of which they were composed, or the manner in which they were put together. That is the origin of the exclusively modern practice of working in architectural styles, as it is called. Why, before the fifteenth century, I don't suppose any man who began to build a building ever thought in what style he should compose it any more than I thought before I got up here in what language I should address you; he simply built in the language to which he was accustomed and which he knew. You will find this perfect truth is the great charm of Grecian architecture, and ten or fifteen centuries later it was the great charm of Gothic architecture; that is to say, that it was founded upon fact, that it was the truth, that it was the thing the man was doing that he was concerned about, even in those pieces of architecture which seem to us the most exuberant, the most fantastic, like the front of Rouen, or like the cathedral of which Longfellow speaks, as you all remember:

‘How strange the sculptures that adorn these towers!
 This crowd of statues, in whose folded sleeves
 Birds build their nests; while, canopied with leaves,
 Parvis and portal bloom like trellised bowers,
 And the vast minster seems a cross of flowers.’⁴

Even in those things there was that logical, law-abiding, sensible, practical adherence to the facts of construction, to the art of building, which we have so long lost, and which I hope we are getting back again.

“There are examples, in the work of our modern architecture, of architects who design with this same truth, with this same reality, with this same sincerity that animated the old builders before the coming-in

* Of course this needs modification, since the mediæval buildings of Italy were accessible to the designers of the Renaissance. What I suppose I had in mind was to point out that they had no knowledge of the original Grecian monuments, from which the classical Roman architecture was derived. [Schuyler's note.]

⁴ Longfellow, *Divina Commedia*, sonnet 2.

of this artificial and irrelevant system of design, and one of them is the building in which I am informed a great many of you spent last evening; I mean the Casino.⁵ I don't know any more admirable illustration of real, genuine, modern architecture than that building; and among all its merits I don't know any merit greater than the fidelity with which the design follows the facts of structure in the features, in the material, in everything. It is a building in baked clay; there isn't a feature in it in brick or in terra-cotta which could be translated into any other material without loss. It is a beautiful, adequate, modern performance. I say this without any reservation, because unfortunately the genius who, in great part, designed that building has gone from us; and there are many things by living architects, whom I cannot mention because they are living, which exhibit these same merits. There is one other example that I would like to mention here, because many of you know his work; I mean the late John Wellborn Root, of Chicago.⁶ I shouldn't mention him either if he hadn't, unfortunately, gone from us. Mr. Root's buildings exhibit the same true sincerity—the knowledge of the material with which he had to do, the fulfilment of the purpose which he had to perform. I don't know any greater loss that could have happened to the architecture of this country and to the architecture of the future than that man dying before his prime. These are stimulating and fruitful examples to the architects of the present time to bring their art more into alliance, more into union, more into identity, with the art of building; and it is by these means, gentlemen, and by these means only, that we can ever gain a living, a progressive, a real architecture—the architecture of the future."

⁵ Casino Theater, NW cor. Broadway and 39th St., (1880-1882; demolished 1930) by (Francis H.) Kimball (1845-1919) & (Thomas) Wisedell (died 1884). Housing operetta and musical comedy for almost half a century, this fanciful, but vigorous, Romanesque-Mooresque building in brick and terra cotta was among New York's most interesting theaters architecturally. Its interior was a theatrical masterpiece in Moorish ornament. Its roof garden, opened in 1883, was reportedly the first in the United States.

⁶ John Wellborn Root, see below, pp. 269-275. His premature death from pneumonia, which he contracted while preliminary design meetings were under way for the Columbian Exposition, occurred on Jan. 15, 1891.

Modern Architecture ⁷

The subject that has been assigned to me is that which I should have chosen had I been left free to choose. It is more true, perhaps, of architecture than of any other of the arts that deal with form that the prosperity and advancement of it depend upon the existence of an enlightened public as well as of skillful practitioners. It is true that the public, any public, is enlightened by the efforts of the practitioners and can be enlightened in no other way. The philosophy of art at least is a philosophy teaching by examples. It is only by familiarity with admirable examples that we come to admire rightly. A sense of responsibility for one's admirations may be called the very beginning of culture, nor can a culture be deemed complete that does not include a discriminating judgment of the works of the oldest and the most pervading of all the arts. It is not to be expected, nor perhaps to be desired, that an educated layman shall possess theories of art and standards of judgment either acquired for himself or derived from others. But it is very much to be desired that he shall have a sense so habitual and automatic that it may well seem to be instinctive of the fitness or unfitness, congruity or incongruity, beauty or ugliness of the buildings that he daily passes, and that in any case must exert upon him an influence that is not the less but the more powerful for being unconsciously felt. Such a sense comes most readily and most surely from the habitual contemplation of excellent works. It is the birthright of a man who has been born and reared in a country in which admirable monuments have been familiar to him from childhood. It is a means of education from which we in this country are necessarily to a great degree debarred, for I suppose it

⁷ *Architectural Record*, 4 (July-Sept. 1894), 1-13. Reproduced in full. Originally delivered as a Butterfield Lecture at Union College, Schenectady, N.Y., Mar. 9, 1894.

will not be denied that there are many American communities in which one may grow up to manhood without once having sight of a respectable specimen of the art of architecture. I remember standing in the square upon which fronts the cathedral of Rouen, one of the loveliest of the legacies the Middle Ages have bequeathed to modern times, and watching the busy throng of Frenchmen and Frenchwomen, the citizens of a bustling modern town, that passed beneath it. There was scarcely one, of whatever rank in life, that did not pause, in passing, long enough to cast one recognizing and admiring glance at the weatherworn and fretted front. Think what an education the daily sight of such a monument constitutes, how it trains the generations that are reared in its shadow, and how deeply a people so unconsciously trained would fail to admire the very smartest and most ornate edifices of many American towns. It seems to me that something of the same beneficial influence is shed upon the people of New York from the spire of Old Trinity, as it soars serenely above the bustle of Broadway, and stops the vista of Wall Street, or upon the people of Boston by the ordered bulk of the tower of the new Trinity looming so large over the dwellings of the Back Bay.⁸

You may retort upon me that the influence of the cathedral of Rouen is not perceptible in the modern architecture of Rouen; but there is much to be said in behalf of the modern architecture that surrounds Rouen cathedral, as of the modern architecture that surrounds Notre Dame of Paris, in comparison with the current architecture of our American towns. I shall not be charged with underrating the essential differences between the mediæval and the modern architecture of France and of Europe, or with overrating the modern architecture, because the difference is in a manner the main theme upon which I have to address you. It seems to me one of the most pointed contrasts that the world affords between a living and progressive and a conventional and stationary art. But the modern building, the current building of France, and more or less of Europe in general, is distinguished in this comparison with the current building of American towns—and in either case I am speaking not of the exceptional works of artists, but of the prevailing and vernacular work of journeymen—

⁸ Trinity Church, Broadway at the head of Wall St., (1839-1846) by Richard Upjohn (1802-1878). Trinity Church, Copley Square, Boston, (1873-1877) by Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-1886).

it is distinguished by certain qualities that we must admit to be valuable, by sobriety, by measure, by discretion. Very much of this comes, no doubt, from the learning of the schools, from the learning in particular of the great school that since the time of the great Louis has dominated the official architecture of France, and the influence of which is transmitted as we see to the common workman. You will remember that these qualities of sobriety, measure, discretion are the very qualities which Mr. Matthew Arnold finds to distinguish French literature in the comparison with English literature, and which in that well-known essay of his upon "The Literary Influence of Academies," he attributes so largely to the existence of the French Academy.⁹ I cannot help thinking that he exaggerates this influence, and that the undeniable difference is more largely due than he admits to national characteristics and less largely to the machinery of institutions.¹⁰ In the national building, however, the national school of France has without doubt had a great influence. It is an influence which is spreading over the world, and which has already established a distinct cult of its own among American architects that is at present perhaps the dominant influence in our own architecture, an influence the nature of which I shall ask you to consider. But these excellent qualities which French building shows in comparison with American building seem to me to be also due largely to the existence of relics of the great art of the past. In England, where there has never been any official inculcation of architecture, the current building is characterized in comparison with our own, though in a less degree, by the same qualities that characterize the French building. It is less violent, more restrained, more decorous. And England, like France, possesses those monuments the very presence of which seems to temper crudity and to repress eccentricity, to make impossible the architectural freaks that seem to be spontaneously generated in the absence of their restraining influence.

It is not many years since an English traveler, not an architect, but a traveled and cultivated man of the world, delivered the opinion that there was no country in the world in which the art of architecture was

⁹ The essay appears in Arnold's *Essays in Criticism*.

¹⁰ Schuyler here alludes to his fear of the influence of the École, just beginning to appear in the United States; see below, Part VI, "The Beaux Arts Reaction." His faith in "national characteristics" as opposed to institutions devoted to maintaining formalistic programs roughly parallels that of Viollet-le-Duc.

at so low a stage as in the United States.¹¹ He had just traversed the continent and there was certainly no malice in his remarks, the spirit of which was entirely amicable. There can be little doubt that his saying simply reflected the impression that an experience like his would be apt to make upon any cultivated European. It is the impression derived, not from the buildings that are the boast of a few towns, the exceptional and artistic performances, but from a general survey of the building of the country. The building is doubtless more crude and provincial, as a rule, in the newer than in the older parts of the country, and one main reason for this is that the older parts of the country, the towns of the Atlantic seaboard that comprised the colonies, contained examples of colonial building that were as nearly as the builders could make them examples of the current architecture of the old country. They were not very many in number nor very extensive in scale, nor very durable in construction. But every one of the Atlantic towns possessed one or more of them that have lasted to our own time or nearly so, and that gave to the builders who lived and worked in their presence examples of measure and sobriety and discretion that tended to preserve them from the excesses of the pioneer builders who had not the advantage of any models whatever.

It is not to be wondered at that some twenty years ago many of the young architects of this country should have become so revolted by the extravagance and the crudity of the current building as to revert to the colonial building for models. And this accounts for the vogue, short lived as it was, which the so-called Queen Anne fashion of building had in this country.¹² Although the revival of it was imported from England and not developed here, it was connected with this admiration for the colonial work which, though it was commonly tame, was at least never wild. The crudity of much of the work that was done during the Gothic revival set architects to studying the classic detail of the old mansions, although a knowledge of this detail was simply part of the stock in trade of the carpenters and the plasterers who were imported during the eighteenth century, and continued to be part of the stock in trade of their successors during the first quarter at least of the nineteenth. Though Queen Anne, specifically so called, was a very passing fashion, the preference for classic detail, as an orderly and

¹¹ Reference unlocated.

¹² See above, pp. 73f, and below, pp. 453-487.

understood assemblage of forms in the use of which it was difficult to attain a positively offensive result, survived Queen Anne, and has been so potent ever since that the present tendency of architecture in this country is a reversion to the Renaissance that has prevailed in Europe for the past three centuries. This tendency has been very powerfully promoted by the increasing influence on this country of the Paris school of fine arts, of which the pupils, filled with its traditions, are every year returning in increased numbers to take part in the building of the United States. Especially has this tendency been stimulated just now by the brilliant success of the architecture of the Columbian Exposition, which was essentially a display, on an imposing scale, of modern French architecture; though it is also true that some of the architecture even of the World's Fair was French not so much after the École des Beaux Arts as "after the Scôle of Stratford atte Bowe."¹³

The attractiveness of the French ideal in architecture is so great that it has imposed itself all over Europe, insomuch that the new quarters of nearly all European cities are becoming imitations of Paris. It is visibly tending to impose itself upon this country also, under the influences to which I have referred, the revolt against the crudity of our unschooled vernacular building and the zealous propagandism of the pupils of the Beaux Arts, and of the architects whom they have in their turn influenced. It would be folly to dispute that the training of the French school, upon which the architectural training of all Europe is more or less modeled, is a most valuable training in qualities and accomplishments that are common to all architecture and that are needed in all architecture. Founded as it is upon the study of the classic orders, it confers or cultivates a perception of proportion and relation, of adjustment and scale, in other words, of that sobriety, measure and discretion which, in whatever style they may be exhibited, or whether they be exhibited in works not to be classified under any of the historical styles, so plainly distinguish the work of an educated from the work of an uneducated architect, precisely as the literary work of a man who has studied the models of literature is distinguished from that of an uneducated man. One may freely own that the current

¹³ On the Exposition, see below, pp. 556-574. "Scôle of Stratford atte Bowe" refers to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*: reference to provincial French spoken after the "Scôle of Stratford atte Bowe" instead of the Parisian example.

architecture of Europe is more admirable than the current architecture of America, and that, if that were all, those architects would have reason who urge us to adopt current European methods in the study of architecture and to naturalize, or at least to import current European architecture. But it is not American architecture alone, it is modern architecture in general that leaves a great deal to be desired as the expression in building of modern life. It is not only our own country, but it is the time that is architecturally out of joint. No thoughtful and instructed person who considers what an expression classic architecture was of classic life, or mediæval architecture of mediæval life, is satisfied with modern architecture, for the reason that no such student can regard it as in the same degree or in the same sense an expression of modern life. The French seem indeed to be very well satisfied with the result of their methods of instruction and practice, but it is worth while to remember that the whole professional and literary life of that French architect whose writings have had the strongest influence upon this generation of readers—I mean Viollet-le-Duc¹⁴—was a protest against the aims and the methods of the *École des Beaux Arts*, and the academic architecture which it produced, as unrepresentative of modern French life, as unreasonable and untrue. So inveterate and so radical was his opposition to the manner in which architecture was taught at the French national school, the training of which is held up to us as a completely adequate model, that on his appearance there as a lecturer he was mobbed by the students whom he was invited to address, and to whom his criticisms seemed to be almost in the nature of blasphemy.

The late Mr. Richardson, whose great services to the architecture of this country no one will deny, who was himself a graduate of the *École des Beaux Arts* and who brought its training to the solution of American architectural problems, bore interesting testimony in the same direction.¹⁵ He told me that, revisiting France many years after his academic experiences in Paris, and when he himself was at the height of his success and celebrity, he had looked up those who had been the most promising of his fellow-students. He found them well-established architects and many of them occupying the position, so much coveted

¹⁴ See above, pp. 10f and 32f.

¹⁵ Richardson attended the *École* from 1859 to 1865. He was the second American to do so, the first being Richard Morris Hunt.

in France, of government architects. But he found them—I do not remember that he made any exceptions, but at any rate he found many of them—deeply dissatisfied with the official architecture which was imposed upon them by the necessities of their careers, lamenting that they were not at liberty to transcend the trammels of the official style, and envying him the freedom he enjoyed in this respect as a practitioner in America and not in France. Surely we may very well hesitate before acknowledging that a system which is thus deprecated, by theorists on the one hand and by practitioners on the other, as inadequate to the architectural needs of the country from which it is derived and in which it has been naturalized for two hundred years, and as incompetent to produce the architectural expression of French life, may be transplanted with confidence as promising complete satisfaction of our own needs, and as offering us the expression in architecture of American life.

How are we to explain the anomaly thus presented? While every other art is living and progressive, architecture is by common consent stationary, if it be not actually retrograde. In every other art the artists have their eyes on the future. They do not doubt that the greatest achievements of their arts are before them and not behind—

That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do.¹⁶

In architecture alone men look back upon the masterpieces of the past not as points of departure but as ultimate attainments, content, for their own part, if by recombining the elements and reproducing the forms of these monuments they can win from an esoteric circle of archæologists the praise of producing some reflex of their impressiveness. This process has gone so far that architects have expected and received praise for erecting for modern purposes literal copies of ancient buildings, or, where the materials for exact reproduction were wanting, of ingenious restorations of those buildings. In architecture alone does an archæological study pass for a work of art. The literature of every modern nation is an express image of the mind and spirit of the nation. The architecture of every modern nation, like the dress of every modern nation, is coming more and more to lose its distinctiveness and to reflect the fashion of Paris. It was not always so. The architecture of Greece and Rome tells us as much as antique literature tells of Greek

¹⁶ Tennyson, *Locksley Hall*.

and Roman life. Mediæval architecture tells us so much more of mediæval life than all other documents of that life that they become insignificant in the comparison, and that from their monuments alone the modern man can succeed in penetrating into the spirit of the Middle Ages. Nay, in our own time the architecture of every country outside the pale of European civilization is a perfectly adequate and a perfectly accurate reflex of the life of that country.

I have spoken of the analogy between architecture and literature. It seems to me that it is not fantastic, and that if we follow it it may lead us to a comprehension of the very different state of the two arts to-day. Nobody pretends that modern literature is not an exact reflex of modern civilization. If we find fault with the condition of it in any country we are not regarding it as a separate product which could be improved by the introduction of different methods. We are simply arraigning the civilization of the country, thus completely expressed. If we find one literature pedantic, another frivolous and another dull, we without hesitation impute these defects as the results of national traits. The notion that any modern literature is not a complete expression of the national life no more occurs to us than the notion that any modern architecture is such an expression.

Now, modern architecture, like modern literature, had its origin in the revival of learning. The Italian Renaissance in architecture was inextricably connected with that awakening of the human spirit which was the beginning of modern civilization. It is not that classic models have been discarded or neglected in the one art and retained in the other, for down to our own generation at least a liberal education, a literary education, has been a classical education. Whatever the baccalaureate degree is coming to mean now, for several centuries it has meant a knowledge of the masterpieces of Greek and Roman letters, as the education of an architect has during the same time implied a knowledge of the masterpieces of Greek and Roman building. A main difference has been that in literature the classical models have been used, and in architecture they have been copied. If writers had hesitated, even while Latin was the universal language in Europe, to use locutions "that would have made Quintilian stare and gasp,"¹⁷ it seems to me quite certain that there could have been no literary progress, while it seems to be almost a tenet of the architectural schools,

¹⁷ Milton, *Sonnet xi*: "A book was writ of late. . . ."

and at any rate it is a fair deduction from modern academic architecture that no architectural progress is possible. There, alone in the work of mankind, the great works of the past are not alone useful for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction, are not even models in the sense in which we use the word in reference to other arts, but are "orders" to be carried out as literally as the conditions will allow, are fetiches to be ignorantly worshiped and invested with mysterious powers.

At the time of the revival of learning the purists were as strenuous in literature as they are even yet in architecture, and for a time as prevailing. The literary classics were to them what the architectural classics still are to the practitioners of official architecture, and the vocabulary of the ancients as sacred a repertory of words as the orders of the ancients a repertory of forms, to which nothing could be added without offense. To them it was not requisite that a writer should express his mind fully; it was not even necessary that he should have anything to say, but it was necessary that his Latinity should be unimpeachable. So long and so far as it was enforced, the restriction to the ancient vocabulary had as deadening an effect upon literature as the like restriction still has upon architecture. Lord Bacon has given an excellent account in a few sentences of the consequence of this "more exquisite travail in the languages original" upon the progress of literature and the advancement of learning. "Men began to hunt more after words than matter; more after the choiceness of the phrase and the round and clean composition of the sentence, and the sweet falling of the clauses * * than after the weight of matter, worth of subject, soundness of argument, life of invention or depth of judgment."¹⁸ The literary purists of the Renaissance were inevitably impatient of men who were preoccupied with what they had to say rather than with their way of saying it, and were especially incensed against the school philosophers "whose writings," to quote Bacon again, "were altogether in a different style and form, taking liberty to coin and frame new terms of art to express their own sense, and to avoid circuit of speech, without regard to the pureness, pleasantness, and, as I may call it, lawfulness of the phrase or word." Substitute "form" for "phrase or word" and you have here an exact statement of the respective positions of the progressive architect and of the architectural purist, and

¹⁸ Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, book 1.

of the reason why it is out of the question that architecture should advance when the teaching and the practice and the judgment of it are confided to the architectural purists.

In literature the restriction did not last long. If it could have lasted it would have arrested the literature and the civilization of Europe, for a demand that nothing should be expressed in new words was in effect a demand that nothing new should be expressed. Such a restriction, when the human spirit had once been aroused, it could not accept. The instinct of self-preservation forbade its acceptance. Men who had something to say insisted upon saying it, saying it at first in barbarous Latin, to the pain of the purists who had nothing to say and did not see why anybody else should have anything to say that could not be expressed in the classical vocabulary; saying it afterwards in "the noble vulgar speech" which at first, and until it had been developed and chastened and refined by literary use, seemed cruder and more barbarous still. The progress of mankind being at stake, the purists in literature were overwhelmed. Only the progress of architecture being at stake in the other case, the purists have prevailed and architecture has been sacrificed, with only local and sporadic revolts, and these for the most part within our own century, in place of the literary revolution that was triumphantly accomplished four centuries ago.

It was not accomplished without a struggle. The "more exquisite travail in the languages original," when there was no other but classical literature, had induced in scholars the belief that the masterpieces of that literature would never be equaled. It is, I believe, still questioned by scholars whether the classic masterpieces have been equaled even yet; while it is the opinion of scholars that the languages in which they were composed are still the most perfect orders of speech that have existed. It was natural, then, that men who had nothing in particular to say, or at any rate felt no urgent need of expressing themselves, should have deemed that classic literature was complete as well as impeccable, and that its limitations could not be transcended. Fortunately for us all, there were other men who felt, with Browning, that

It were better youth
Should strive, through acts uncouth,
Toward making, than repose on aught found made,¹⁹

¹⁹ Browning, *Dramatis Personae*, "Rabbi Ben Ezra."

and these men were the greatest scholars as well as the greatest thinkers of the age. Politian, of whom it has been said by a critic of our own time that he "showed how the taste and learning of the classical scholar could be grafted on the stock of the vernacular," ridiculed the purists in better Latin than their own. "Unless the book is at hand from which they copy," he said, "they cannot put three words together. I entreat you not to be fettered by that superstition. As nobody can run who is intent upon putting his feet in the footsteps of another, so nobody can write well who does not dare to depart from what is already written."²⁰ And while the Italian scholar was deriding the Italian pedants, the Dutch scholar, who did not even look forward to a time when the vernacular should supplant Latin, yet protested against the imposition of classic forms as shackles upon modern thought. "Hereafter," said Erasmus, "we must not call bishops reverend fathers, nor date our letters from the birth of Christ, because Cicero never did so. What could be more senseless, when the whole age is new, religion, government, culture, manners, than not to dare to speak otherwise than Cicero spoke. If Cicero himself should come to life, he would laugh at this race of Ciceronians."²¹

It would be as presumptuous in me as it is far from my intention to disparage academic training, in architecture or in literature. The men who have done most towards building up these great literatures that are at once the records and the trophies of modern civilization have for the most part been classical scholars, and classical scholarship stood them in particularly good stead when they worked in the vernacular, especially during the formative periods of these literatures, when there were as yet no standards or models but those of antiquity. Perhaps what seems to us the most autochthonous of our literature owed more to this culture than we are apt to suppose. "I always said," Dr. Johnson observes, "that Shakespeare had enough Latin to grammaticise his English."²² These writers derived from their classical studies a literary tact that could have been imparted so well in no other way. Certainly the same thing is true of the classically trained architects. Whether they are working in the official style that has been the language of their schools, or have attempted the idiomatic and

²⁰ Reference unlocated.

²¹ Erasmus, *Ciceronianus*.

²² Boswell, *Johnson*, under the year 1780.

vernacular treatment of more extended and varied methods of construction than the very simple construction of Greece, which was expressed with consummate art, and the more ambitious and complicated construction of the Romans, which yet is simple compared with our modern constructions and which cannot be said to have attained its artistic expression; in either case there is equally in their work this tact, this measure and propriety that bespeak professional training. It is not the training that I am deprecating, but the resting in the training as not a preparation but an attainment. There is another pregnant saying of Bacon that would well recur to us when we see the attempt to meet modern requirements without departing from antique forms, and to carry out academic exercises in classic architecture into actual buildings: "Studies teach not their own use, but that is a wisdom without them and above them, won by observation."²³ It is as if an educated man in our day should confine his literary efforts to Latin composition. Very curious and admirable essays have been made even in modern Latin and even in our own time. To see how near one can come to expressing modern ideas in classical language is an interesting and useful exercise, by the very force of the extreme difficulty of even suggesting them, and the impossibility of really expressing them. When the modern Latinist has finished this circuitous and approximative progress he has produced what—a poem? No, but only an ingenious toy for the amusement of scholars, a "classic design." If he devoted his whole literary life to the production of such things we should be entitled to pronounce decisively that he had nothing to say, or he would take the most direct way of saying it. It would be evident that he was preoccupied with the expression and not with the thing to be expressed, not with the idea but "with the pureness, pleasantness and, as I may call it, lawfulness of the phrase or word."

A living and progressive classic poetry, in our day, we all perceive to be merely a contradiction in terms. Classicism is the exclusion of life and progress; and a living and progressive classic architecture is in fact equally a contradiction in terms. Forms are the language of the art of building and architectural forms are the results and the expression of construction. This is true of the architecture of the world before the Renaissance, excepting the Roman imitations of Greek

²³ Bacon, *Essays*, "Of Studies."

architecture. It is true even now of the architecture of all that part of the world which lies outside the pale of European civilization. It is only since the Renaissance, and in Europe and America, that classic forms have been used as an envelope of constructions not classic, and that the attempt to develop building into architecture has been abandoned in favor of the attempt to cover and to conceal building with architecture. This attempt is beset with difficulties, by reason of the modern requirements that cannot be concealed. I have heard of a classic architect saying that it was impossible to do good work nowadays on account of the windows. This is an extreme instance, doubtless, but the practitioner of classic architecture must often be as much annoyed by the intrusion of his building into his design, and the impossibility of ignoring or of keeping it out altogether, as the modern Latin poet by the number of things of which the classic authors never heard that he has to find words for out of the classic authors. The versifier does not venture to complain in public, because everybody would laugh at him, and ask him why he did not write English. But the classic architect is not afraid to make his moan, and to complain of the intractability of modern architectural problems, or to excuse himself from attempting a solution of them upon the ground that they do not fit the classic forms. He is not likely to find sympathy in his complaint of the oppressiveness of shackles which, in this country at least, he has voluntarily assumed. Why should we not laugh at him also? He, too, may be recommended to write English, which in his case means to give the most direct expression possible to his construction in his forms, and to use his training to make this expression forcible, "elegant" and scholarly; poetical, if the gods have made him poetical; at any rate, "to grammaticise his English" instead of confining himself to an expression that is avowedly indirect, circuitous, conventional and classic, a "polite language" like the Latin of modern versifiers. *Si revivisceret ipse Cicero, rideret hoc Ciceronianorum genus.*²⁴

The repertory of the architectural forms of the past is the vocabulary of the architect. But there is this difference between his vocabulary and that of the poet, that a word is a conventional symbol, while a true architectural form is the direct expression of a mechanical fact. Any structural arrangement is susceptible, we must believe, of an artistic

²⁴ See above, p. 109n. A repetition of Erasmus' statement in the original Latin.

and effective expression. Historical architecture contains precedents, to be acquainted with which is a part of professional education, for many if not for most of the constructions commonly used in modern building. But classic architecture does not contain them. The Greek construction is the simplest possible. The more complicated Roman construction was not artistically developed and expressed by the Romans themselves and the literary revivalists of classic architecture of the fifteenth century restricted themselves and their successors to the Roman expression without very clearly understanding what it was. They were more royalist than the king, more Ciceronian than Cicero. If we are to accept the statement of Viollet-le-Duc, Vitruvius himself, if he had submitted his own design, as he describes it, for the basilica of Fano, in a competition of the École des Beaux Arts at the beginning of this century, would have been ruled out of the competition for his ignorance of Roman architecture.²⁵ But in any case, the classical building embraces but a small part of the range of constructions that are available to the modern builder. To confine one's self to classic forms means therefore to ignore and reject, or else to cloak and dissemble, the constructions of which the classic builders were ignorant, or which they left undeveloped, to be developed by the barbarians. And here comes in another restricting tenet of the schools, that you must not confuse historical styles. No matter how complete an expression of an applicable construction may have been attained, if it does not come within the limits of the historic style that you have proposed to yourself, it is inadmissible. This is not a tenet of the official schools exclusively. It is imposed wherever architecture is practiced archæologically. In the early days of the Gothic revival in England, Gothic building was divided and classified, more or less arbitrarily, and it would fatally have discredited an architect to mix Early English and Middle Pointed, or to introduce any detail for which he had not historical precedent, and this without regard to the artistic success of his work but only to its historical accuracy. It was not until the architects of the revival outgrew this superstition that their work had much other than an archæological interest. Any arbitrary restriction

²⁵ Reference to the description which the Roman architectural writer of the time of Augustus, Vitruvius, makes in his *De Architectura* to a basilica which he built in Fano. Since no illustrations accompanied the ambiguous description, scholars have suggested various reconstructions. One of the best known is that of Viollet-le-Duc in his *Discourses*, lecture 5, plates 8, 9, and 10.

upon the freedom of the artist is a hindrance to the life and progress of his art. While it is no doubt more difficult to attain unity by the use of constructions that have been employed and expressed in different ages and countries than by renouncing all but such as have been employed together before, and have been analyzed and classified in the schools, the artist is entitled to be judged by the success of his attempts and not to be prevented from making them. American architects are happy in being freer than the architects of any other country from the pressure of this convention. By the introduction of the elevator, some twenty years ago, an architectural problem absolutely new was imposed upon them, a problem in the solution of which there were no directly available and no directly applicable precedents in the history of the world. That many mistakes should be made, and that much wild work should be done was inevitable. But within these twenty years there has been attained not only a practical but in great part an artistic solution of this problem presented by the modern office building. The efforts of the architects have already resulted in a new architectural type, which in its main outlines imposes itself, by force of merit, upon future designers and upon which future designers can but execute variations. This is really a very considerable achievement, this unique contribution of American architects to their art. While the architects who have had most to do with establishing it have been learned and trained as well as thoughtful designers, it seems to me that they have had advantages here that they could not have enjoyed where conventional and academic restrictions had more force. Certainly, in all the essays that have been made towards the solution of this new problem, none have been less fortunate and less successful than those of academically trained architects, who have undertaken to meet a new requirement by an aggregation of academic forms, and to whom studies had not taught their own use. But the problem is by no means yet completely solved. The real structure of these towering buildings, the "Chicago construction," is a structure of steel and baked clay, and when we look for an architectural expression of it, or for an attempt at an architectural expression of it, we look in vain.²⁶ No matter what the merits or demerits may be of the architectural envelope of masonry, it is still an envelope, and not the thing itself, which is nowhere, inside or out, permitted to appear. The structure cannot be expressed in

²⁶ See above, pp. 65-71, and below, pp. 377-384.

terms of historical architecture, and for that reason the attempt to express it has been foregone. The first attempts to express it must necessarily be rude and inchoate. The new forms that would result from these attempts would be repellent, in the first place because of their novelty, even if they were perfect from the beginning; in the second place, because in the nature of things and according to the experience of mankind, they cannot be perfect from the beginning, for the labors not only of many men but of many generations have been required to give force and refinement to the expression in architectural forms of any system of construction. If the designer, however, is repelled by the strangeness of the forms that result from early attempts to express what has not been expressed before, if "youth" will not "strive through acts uncouth toward making" but takes refuge in "aught found made," that is the abandonment of progress. The Chicago construction doubtless presents a difficult problem. All problems are difficult till they are solved. But the difficulty is no greater than other difficulties that have been encountered in the history of architecture and that have been confronted and triumphantly overcome. Is there anything in modern construction that is *a priori* more unpromising, as a subject for architectural treatment, than a shore of masonry, built up on the outside of a wall to prevent it from being thrust out by the pressure from within? I do not know what the modern architect would do as an artist if as a constructor he found it necessary to employ such a member. In the absence of applicable precedents he would be apt to conclude that so ugly an appendage to his building would not do to show, and to conceal it behind a screen-wall nicely decorated with pilasters. But the builders upon whom the use of this member was imposed, not having enjoyed the advantage of a classical education, saw nothing for it but to exhibit the shore and to try to make it presentable by making it expressive of its function. Their early efforts were so "uncouth" that the modern architect, if he had seen the work at this stage, would have been confirmed in his conclusion that the shore was architecturally intractable. The mediæval builders kept at work at it, master after master, and generation after generation, until at last they made it speak. Made it speak? They made it sing, and there it is, a new architectural form, the flying buttress of a Gothic cathedral, an integral part of the most complicated and most complete

organism ever produced by man, one of the organisms so like those of nature that Emerson might well say that —

Nature gladly give them place,
Adopted them into her race,
And granted them an equal date
With Andes and with Ararat.²⁷

The analogy is more than poetically true. In art as in nature an organism is an assemblage of interdependent parts of which the structure is determined by the function and of which the form is an expression of the structure. Let us hear Cuvier on natural organisms.

A claw, a shoulder-blade, a condyle, a leg or arm-bone, or any other bone separately considered, enables us to discover the description of teeth to which they have belonged; so also reciprocally we may determine the form of the other bones from the teeth. Thus, commencing our investigations by a careful survey of any one bone by itself, a person who is sufficiently master of the laws of organic structure may, as it were, reconstruct the whole animal to which that bone had belonged.²⁸

This character of the organisms of nature is shared by at least one of the organisms of art. A person sufficiently skilled in the laws of organic structure can reconstruct, from the cross-section of the pier of a Gothic cathedral, the whole structural system of which it is the the nucleus and prefigurement. The design of such a building seems to me to be worthy, if any work of man is worthy, to be called a work of creative art. It is an imitation not of the forms of nature but of the processes of nature. Perhaps it was never before carried out so far or so successfully as in the thirteenth century. Certainly it has not been carried out so successfully since. This has not been for lack of constructions waiting to receive an artistic expression, for mechanical science has been carried far beyond the dreams of the mediæval builders, and the scientific constructors are constantly pressing upon the artistic constructor, upon the architect, in new structural devices, new problems that the architect is prone to shirk. He is likely to be preoccupied with new arrangements and combinations of historical forms. He asks himself, as it has been said, not what would Phidias

²⁷ Emerson, "The Problem."

²⁸ Georges L. C. F. Cuvier, *Recherches sur les ossements fossiles* (Paris, 1812). It is the fundamental principle of paleontological reconstruction and articulation.

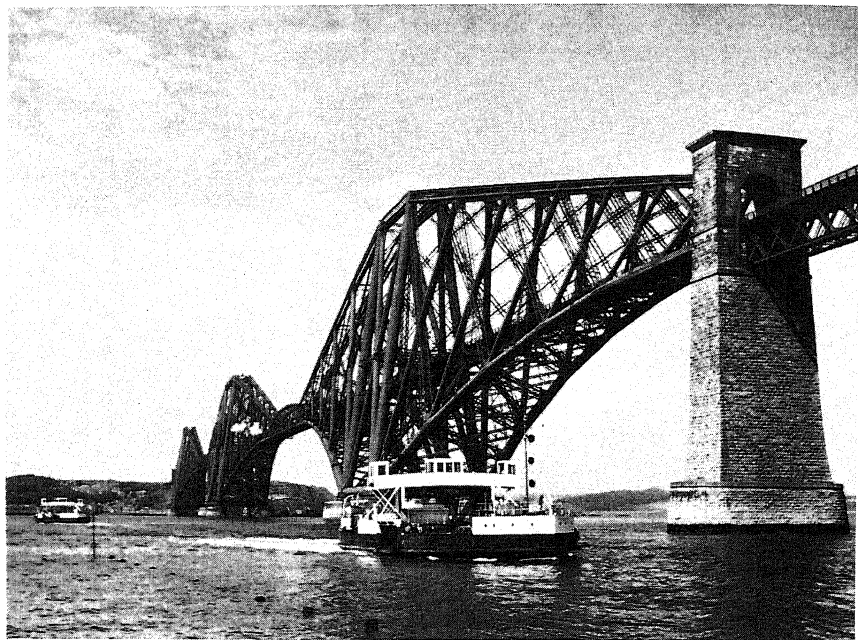


Fig. 14. Sir John Fowler and Sir Benjamin Baker. Firth of Forth Bridge, Queensferry, Scotland, 1881-1890.

have done if he had had this thing to do, but what did Phidias when he had something else to do. An architectural form, being the ultimate expression of a structural arrangement, cannot be foreseen, and the form which the new expression takes comes as a surprise to its author. He cannot more than another tell beforehand with what body it will come. Take one modern instance, the so-called cantilever of modern engineering. Some of you may be familiar with representations of the Forth bridge in Scotland,²⁹ in which that recent device has been used upon the largest scale thus far and with the most impressive results [Fig. 14]. There is one of the new architectural forms for which we are unthinkingly asking. Is it conceivable that this form could have occurred to a man who sat down to devise a new form, without reference to its basis and motive in the laws of organic structure? And so it is always with real architectural forms. There have been very voluminous

²⁹ † Firth of Forth Bridge at Queensferry, Scotland, (1881-1890) by Sir John Fowler (1817-1890) and Sir Benjamin Baker (1840-1907).

discussions within this century upon the "invention" of the pointed arch, discussions which have come to little because they have started from a baseless assumption. Architectural forms are not invented; they are developed, as natural forms are developed, by evolution. A main difference between our times and the mediæval times is that then the scientific constructor and the artistic constructor were one person, now they are two. The art of architecture is divided against itself. The architect resents the engineer as a barbarian; the engineer makes light of the architect as a dilettante. It is difficult to deny that each is largely in the right. The artistic insensibility of the modern engineer is not more fatal to architectural progress than the artistic irrelevancy of the modern architect. In general, engineering is at least progressive, while architecture is at most stationary. And, indeed, it may be questioned whether, without a thought of art, and, as it were, in spite of himself, the engineer has not produced the most impressive, as certainly he has produced the most characteristic monuments of our time. "A locomotive," says Viollet-le-Duc, "has its peculiar physiognomy, not the result of caprice but of necessity. Some say it is but an ugly machine. But why ugly? Does it not have the true expression of brutal energy?"³⁰ The modern battleship is purely an engineering construction, developed in accordance with its functions as a fighting-machine, and without conscious reference to the expression of these functions. Yet no one who has seen a typical and completely-developed example of the modern war ship, such as the *Jean Bart*,³¹ which has been seen in American waters, needs to be told that it is a more moving expression of the horrors of war than has ever been seen in the world before; that no poet's or painter's dream of

That fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse and rigged with curses dark,³²

appeals with anything like so much force to the imagination as this actual, modern and prosaic machine of murder. What may we not hope from the union of modern engineering with modern architecture, when the two callings, so harshly divorced, are again united, and when

³⁰ Viollet-le-Duc, *Discourses*, ed. Van Brunt, 1, 182. Such remarks as these prefigure Le Corbusier's machine analogies in *Toward a New Architecture*, 1st ed. (1922).

³¹ † The "*Jean Bart*," launched in 1889, was among the more formidable French cruisers of its day.

³² Milton, *Lycidas*.

the artistic constructor employs his cultivated sensibility and his artistic training, not to copying, but to producing, no longer to the compilation of the old forms, but to the solution of the new problems that press upon him; when he shall have learned the use of the studies that teach not their own use.

II. The Heritage of Victorian Gothic

The Works of Francis H. Kimball¹

Victorian Gothic begins to seem very remote, the more to some of us is the pity, and it may at least be regarded in an undistorted historical perspective. By Victorian Gothic I do not mean especially that Italianized mode of mediaeval architecture, which was distinguished by the free introduction, in exteriors and interiors alike, of as many colors as could be found in available building material, and as could be harmonized in a design, and very often more. This was what is specifically known as Victorian Gothic, and it was introduced largely through the eloquent enthusiasm of Mr. Ruskin,² who really cared more about the mediaeval building of North Italy than about the French Gothic of which it was a picturesque degeneration. On the technical side such works as Street's "Brick and Marble in Italy,"³ gave impetus to the movement, which, however, was but an episode of the Gothic Revival. What I mean is the Gothic revival which indeed had been begun, on archaeological and ecclesiological rather than on artistic considerations, before Queen Victoria's reign, but which during that reign attained to a much higher degree of historical accuracy and scholarly competency than before, and also to a much more just comprehension of what the root of Gothic architecture was, and that this root was adequate not merely to have produced the forms which the early revivalists set themselves to reproducing, but also to grow new forms in a new

¹ *Architectural Record*, 7 (Apr.-June 1898), 479-518. Excerpted. Biographical information on Kimball introduces the article.

² The major sources for John Ruskin's (1819-1900) architectural ideals are, of course, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (first published 1849) and *The Stones of Venice* (1851, plus two further volumes of lesser influence in 1853). His *Lectures on Architecture* (1853) is also significant.

³ George Edmund Street, *Brick and Marble in the Architecture of the Middle Ages in Italy*, 1st ed. (London, 1855). See above, p. 5n.

material and moral environment. If this truth had been apprehended clearly enough and by practitioners numerous enough, there would by now be no longer a question of "style," but architects would be doing architecture.

Failure as we have to own that it was, the Gothic revival showed enough of the promise and potency of life to attract a great majority of the ambitious young architects of England and America during the sixth and seventh decades of the century, say from the London World's Fair of 1851 to the Philadelphia World's Fair of 1876. What there was of life and progress in English and American—nay, in European architecture—during that third quarter of the century came from it.

It will be agreed that a young American practitioner could not have served a more valuable apprenticeship to his craft at that time than that which Mr. Kimball was privileged to go through in the office of William Burges.⁴ Nobody will dispute Mr. Burges's claim to a place among the leaders of the Gothic revival in England. In the archaeological part of his equipment he had his equals, and possibly his superiors, but many of the Gothic archaeologists were actually burdened with their knowledge when the question was of designing, and the result of their labors was apt to be more in the nature of a reproduction than of a revival. Mr. Burges differed from most of his coworkers in starting neither from the English Gothic, which patriotism induced so many of them to adopt, nor from the Italian into which others were led by Mr. Ruskin's eloquence, but from the parent French Gothic. "Only primitive sources furnish the energy for a long career."⁵ In this he really attained freedom and individuality. Cardiff Castle and the Cork Cathedral are likely to be admired as long as they stand, as among the most fruitful results of the Gothic revival. But to many students, including the present writer, the high-water mark not only of Mr. Burges's own work but of the Gothic revival, was attained in his unexecuted design for the Law Courts, which, although

⁴ William Burges (1827-1881) designed a campus for Trinity College, Hartford, Conn., in 1873, which was only about one-sixth executed. The executed section finished according to Burges's plan is the western side of the central quadrangle, designated for dormitories and classrooms in the original design. Either Kimball or (as Hitchcock believes) G. W. Keller (1842-1935) supervised the work for Burges. Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, pp. 187f, has termed it the "best example anywhere of Victorian collegiate architecture."

⁵ Viollet-le-Duc, *Discourses*, ed. Van Brunt, I, 227.

it remained on paper, furnished the inspiration for some admired buildings on each side of the Atlantic.⁶ A sojourn in his office, followed by the supervision of an important work of his, was nearly as good a course of professional preparation as a young American architect could have obtained at that time. Certainly it was a wholesome corrective after a course of the entirely commonplace American commercial Renaissance of that time, in detailing and supervising which Mr. Kimball had already familiarized himself with building operations. Its influence is to be detected not only in the work which Mr. Kimball did in Gothic, but in that which he has done in classic. Certainly his own "commercial Renaissance" has more affinity with Mr. Burges's French Gothic than with the commercial Renaissance of his earliest apprenticeship. And, indeed, there is this to be said for the real study of any style, as a preparation for the practice of architecture, that it does confer a perception of proportion and relation and scale which is as valuable in one style as in another. It is indispensable when one comes to deal, as it is to be hoped that the architects of the future will be bold enough to deal, with constructions which are as yet "ferae naturae," and for which they have to find artistic and expressive forms, constructions which have not yet been reduced by the labor of generations to that assorted set of forms which we call a style. Certainly in Mr. Kimball's work the influence of Mr. Burges may be traced in works which in purpose and style have no relation to anything that Mr. Burges himself ever had occasion to undertake. . . .

Mr. Kimball's first independent work of any importance, the Hartford Orphan Asylum,⁷ was designed while he was still employed at Trinity College, and might be expected to be an extreme example of Gothic. Possibly it was for want of money that the style is not more distinctly designated. The buttresses of the wing, and the arcuation of a few of the principal openings are to a casual inspection almost the only badges of the style. Otherwise the work is simply an example of artistic building; that is to say, it aims at such a disposition in mass

⁶ Restoration of Cardiff Castle, Wales (beginning 1865), and St. Finbar's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Cork, (competition 1863; 1865-1867) by William Burges. Law Courts, London: competition (1866) won by George Street (1824-1881). They were only built in 1874-1882.

⁷ Hartford Orphan Asylum (1876-1878; demolished 1934), a stark brick building with minimal Gothic allusions. It is discussed in *American Architect and Building News*, 4 (Nov. 23, 1878), 174.

and such a treatment in detail as to express the arrangement, the material and the construction. That was the gist of the Gothic revival, only unfortunately its practitioners were not able to convince the public of that fact. They introduced into their work all kinds of features of historical Gothic which not only enabled the wayfaring man to designate the buildings as Gothic, but forced him to associate them with ecclesiastical architecture. He declined to accept them as either modern or secular, and small blame to him. The fault was not his, but that of the revivalists, with the repertory of irrelevant quotations with which they insisted upon garnishing their ordinary conversation. If all the secular work of the Gothic revival had been as straightforward and expressive, and as successfully designed as this asylum, the wayfaring man would not have perceived it to be Gothic, while it would have been more truly Gothic all the same. . . .

The Works of Cady, Berg & See⁸

... A sensitive and enthusiastic American architect, beginning his practice thirty years ago, unless he was diverted from his normal course by some foreign influence, almost inevitably began with Victorian Gothic. That is a phrase of rather baleful import now, so many restless, disjointed and crudely colored edifices have been committed in its name, so many more than of the examples of peace and quietness which also illustrate it. But at that time it was a phrase to conjure with and indeed it was "a marvellous good word before it was ill-sorted."⁹ No doubt Ruskin's eloquence had much to do with its vogue, but there were practitioners who took it up on the technical even more than on the literary side, who undertook not merely to reproduce but to revive Gothic, and who did in it things true and artistic, and not to be forgotten. The fundamental principle that construction should give its own forms can never become obsolete. If the "style" has been discredited, it is because the practitioners on the one hand confined the application of the principle to the period in which it was without doubt most brilliantly illustrated, but in which the forms were the expressions of a construction no longer current or vernacular; on the other because the recklessness of half-education is the more distressing in its results the more freedom the designer is allowed by his style. It may be questionable whether we have had any other buildings better than the best that the Gothic revival gave us; but it cannot be questioned that we have had no other as bad as the worst. Thirty years ago, the revival

⁸ *Architectural Record*, 6 (Apr.-June 1897), 517-552. Excerpted. (J. Cleveland) Cady (1837-1919), (Louis De Coppet) Berg (born 1856) & (Milton) See (1854-1920); biographical information introduces the article.

⁹ Shakespeare, *Henry IV*.

was at its height. The leaders of the profession in England had in great part outgrown the notion that purity depended upon the actual reproduction of old details, and had learned to compose in their style with freedom and without pedantry. Moreover, they had extended it from ecclesiastical to civic and to domestic architecture with an encouraging measure of success. The competition for the Law Courts was just then in progress.¹⁰ Although the final outcome of this was so disappointing as probably to give the final stroke to the revival, the designs were of singular interest; more interesting probably than those submitted in any English competition before or since. What most architects would probably pronounce to be the finest achievement of the revival, Mr. Burges's design for this structure, though unsuccessful, had made a great impression upon the architects of England and America, and in both countries reminiscences of it may be found in actual buildings.

The first important work of Mr. Cady's, so important, indeed, that for the execution of his design he associated with himself a more experienced practitioner, was the Brooklyn Academy of Design [Fig. 15].¹¹ This was not only a distinctly Gothic work, but it seems to have been in a considerable degree inspired by the design of which I have just spoken. It is not an imitation, however, in any sense that at all diminishes the credit of the later author. The proportion of the stories, the placing and proportioning of the arcade, and the suggestion of the dormer, may very well have been derived from Mr. Burges's work. The preference for French detail over the English which imposed itself upon most of the revivalists and the Italian which Mr. Ruskin's eloquence had imposed upon some of them, which was one of the marks of Mr. Burges's work is equally shown here. But the main motive of the composition—the relation between the narrower and taller front crowned by the steep gable and the broader and lower with its crested roof relieved by the gabled dormer—was quite the young designer's own. It was carried out with unfailing pains and skill and to a most fortunate result. The detail is all thoroughly studied in itself and very successfully adjusted in scale. This success in scale is one of the points that make the work so remarkable as a first essay.

¹⁰ See above, p. 123n.

¹¹ † Brooklyn Academy of Design, Montague St., (c. 1875; demolished) by Cady and Henry M. Congdon (1838–1922). Also known as the Academy of Science.

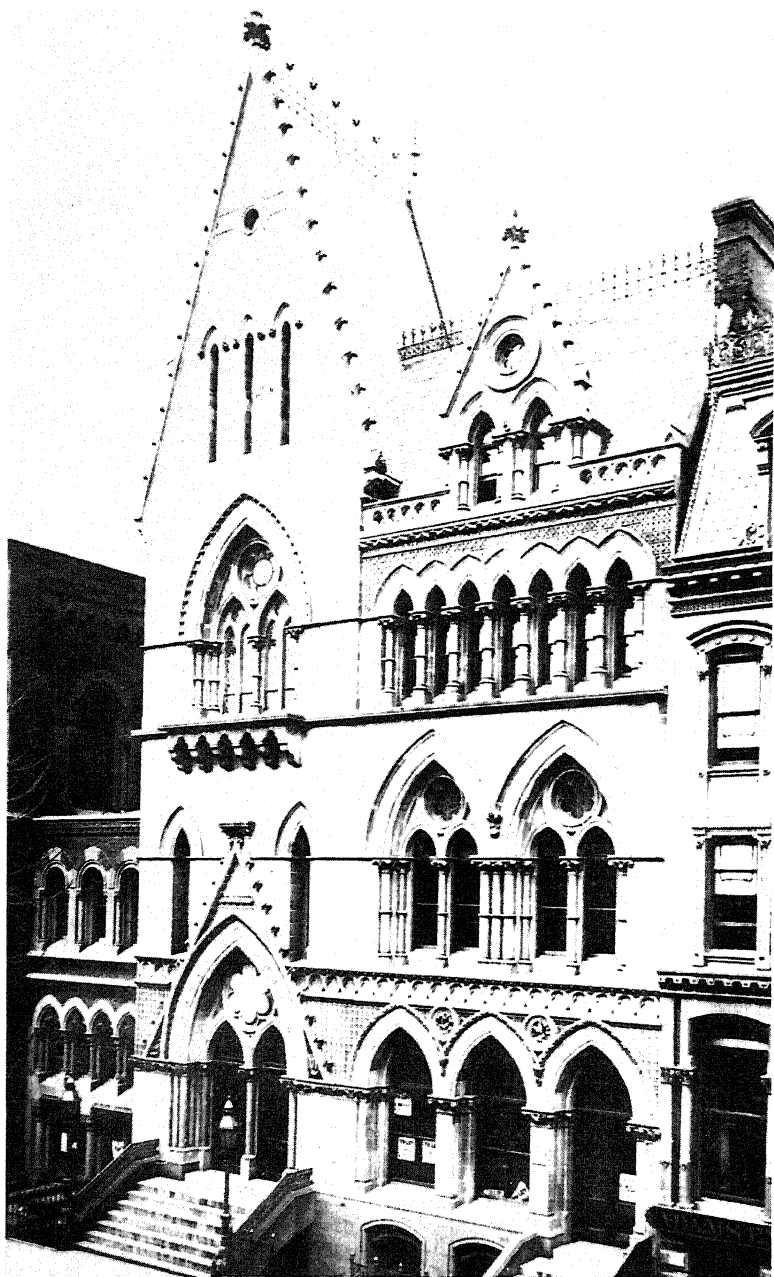


Fig. 15. J. Cleveland Cady and Henry M. Congdon. Brooklyn Academy of Design, Brooklyn, N. Y., c. 1875.

But indeed the front has throughout an air of ease and ripeness as far as possible from the crudity which disfigured so many of the works of the revival, and perhaps more than any external influence accounted for its abandonment. If the revival had produced many works as good as this it might have retained its hold upon architects and obtained a hold upon the public. This is as restrained and sober in color as in design. The violent contrasts in which many of the revivalists loved to indulge themselves are carefully avoided, and although seven or eight different tints of natural stone are introduced, the introduction is so discreet, and the result so harmonious that the vivacity imparted by the variety is attained without any loss of the sobriety and repose of monochrome. One would be at a loss to name any later work in its kind which is more effective. It gained greatly when it was built, by being a member of an extremely interesting group. It adjoined the long and solid and somewhat sombre façade of the Academy of Music, itself one of the marked successes of the Gothic revival, and it confronted another product of that revival in the Mercantile Library, a picturesque and effective front [Fig. 16].¹² The buildings are all there today; but the effect of ensemble which they made a quarter of a century ago has been utterly destroyed by unneighborly neighbors which have since arrived. These are of varying degrees of demerit in themselves, but the only thing they show in common is a manifestation of disrespect, not only for each other but for their predecessors. But if one wishes to see what the promise was that was broken by the abandonment of the revival, there is no place in this country where he can see it to better advantage. . . .

¹² Academy of Music, Montague St., Brooklyn, N. Y., (1860-1861; destroyed by fire 1904) by Leopold Eidlitz (1823-1908). Mercantile Library (later a branch of the Brooklyn Public Library), 197 Montague St., (1867; demolished 1960) by Peter B. Wight (1838-1925).



Fig. 16. Peter B. Wight. Mercantile Library, Brooklyn, N. Y., 1867.

The Work of Barney & Chapman ¹³

Since the adoption of a distinctly Gothic design for the enlargement of West Point,¹⁴ it has become more permissible than it has been for twenty years or so to discuss the suitability of Gothic for other than strictly ecclesiastical uses. It is quite true, as I have had the honor of pointing out in these pages (*Architectural Record*, Vol. XIV., No. 6) that the choice of Gothic at West Point was practically compelled, short of a clean sweep of the existing buildings, with all their traditions, which would have been an operation of a more than architectural vandalism, so that the competition was by no means a "Battle of the Styles." If it had been, or if the expert advisers of the authorities had taken that view of it, we may be sure, from their own respective works, that a Gothic design would not have received their preference. They simply found themselves forced, by fidelity to the interests in which they were employed, to recommend a Gothic design for this particular purpose. But, none the less, the result was, as it could hardly help being, acclaimed on the one side, the side of the minority, "few and faint, but fearless still," as a victory in that battle, and deplored on the other, the side of the aggressive and triumphant majority, as a defeat in it.

¹³ *Architectural Record*, 16 (Sept. 1904), 209-296. Excerpted. (J. Stewart) Barney (1869-1924) & (Otis) Chapman. On Barney's architectural philosophy, see his "The National Style of Architecture Will Be Established on Truth and Not Tradition," *Architectural Record*, 24 (Nov. 1908), 381-386.

¹⁴ Reference to the competition held in 1903 for the enlargement of West Point and won by the Gothic design of (Ralph Adams) Cram (1863-1942), (Bertram Grosvenor) Goodhue (1869-1924) & (Frank William) Ferguson (1861-1926). As a result of their victory, the firm completed North Barracks (1908), Power House (1909), Administration Building (1909), East Gymnasium (1910), Cadet Chapel (1910), Riding (now Thayer) Hall (1911), and East Academic Building (1913). The firm discussed its competition drawings in *Architectural Review* (Boston), 10 (June 1903), 67-69, plates 31-35. See also Schuyler's critique of certain of these buildings: "The Works of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson" (1911-A, pp. 87-111).

In fact, one of the disappointed competitors was overheard to remark, in the heat of his disappointment, that this result had put back architecture in the United States for half a century. To those who are by no means of that opinion, there is a special interest in the work of an architect who has continued to devote himself to Gothic in spite of the dictate of fashion, as followed and imposed by the great majority of his profession, that the Gothic revival is hopelessly dead.

That is a proposition which one finds great difficulty in accepting. While human nature remains what it is, the romantic element in art, in all art, will sometimes break out. The preference for it seems, on the part of those who have it, to be temperamental and instinctive. *Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret*.¹⁵ The formal and periwig-pated Georgian art in England seemed to be, at the end of the eighteenth century, far more firmly established in all arts, literature particularly included, than the French academic architecture can to anybody seem to be established "here and now." And yet Walter Scott, preceded though he had been by Collins and Gray and Thomson, inaugurated a movement which not only characterized English literature throughout the nineteenth century, but swept over all Europe, and had its distinct effect upon the arts that deal with form. It became so firmly established as to enlist many men who were by instinct and temperament classics and not romantics at all, as, in architecture, the respectable Sir Gilbert Scott, whom nature destined for a correct composer in classic, but who found himself, possibly to his own astonishment, one of the leaders of the Gothic revival.¹⁶ That revival obtained, a third of a century ago, unquestioned control of the building of England, of which the United States was architecturally still a dependency, and of South Germany, and produced practitioners who really seemed to work in the mediaeval spirit as well as with mediaeval forms. In France, despite the vigorous protestantism of Viollet-le-Duc and his coadjutors, the official style, aided by the official inculcation, was too deeply rooted to be displaced, and the displacement was rendered the more hopeless by the fact that the protestants were so unsuccessful as designers. Indeed, the ineptitude of the modern Frenchman to the style of which his country was the birthplace, and of which it contains the chief

¹⁵ "Drive out nature with a pitchfork, she will always find a way back." Horace, *Epistles*, I.

¹⁶ Sir George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878) headed one of the largest London firms of his day. His most familiar work today is perhaps the Albert Memorial.

monuments, the country being at the same time the home of one of the most artistic of modern peoples, is one of the strangest of the many strange anomalies in the history of modern architecture.

All the same, the Gothic revival, in the sense of an attempt to extend the style of the Middle Ages to all modern requirements, was a failure, and we have to own that it deserved to fail. It failed because "the letter killeth," and because the archaeological and ecclesiological traditions which in England had so much to do with bringing it about,¹⁷ prevailed, with the majority of its practitioners, to the end. Those who attained to a perception of the principle, as separable from the forms of mediaeval building, perceived and proclaimed that that principle was capable of meeting the exigencies of new constructions and new principles as, in the thirteenth century, it had met the exigencies of a vaulted construction in masonry. To this there was no logical answer possible except a demand that the new forms should be produced, and the new forms were not forthcoming. The revival declined to a mere preference for Gothic over classic forms, which were equally and only equally irrelevant to modern requirements, with the addition, to be sure, of the far wider range and variety of the Gothic repertory, but with correlative drawbacks, of which one of the chief was the apparent impossibility of employing independent and fully developed sculpture in association with those architectural forms. One may maintain that the impossibility was only apparent; that the Gothic sculptors modeled as well as they knew how, even though their work, like that of the Egyptian sculptors, was conditioned by the architecture and took on architectural lines and an architectural character; that they would have made better figure sculpture if they had known the figure better, and that they would have found some way of combining this more perfect sculpture with the architecture. But, obviously, the only satisfactory way of making this demonstration would have been by way of an object lesson, in which the more developed sculpture should equally take its place as part of the architectural effect. A partial solution of this problem has lately been offered, here in New York, in the new porch of St. Bartholomew's, where a sculptor of modern acquirements and of distinct individuality had to fit his work to an archaeological

¹⁷ On the Camden Society and the Ecclesiological movement insofar as these influenced architecture, see Charles Locke Eastlake, *A History of the Gothic Revival* (London, New York, 1872), *passim*; Sir Kenneth Clark, *The Gothic Revival* (London, 1928; 2nd ed. 1950), chap. 8; Hitchcock, *Early Victorian Architecture in Britain*, 1, chaps. 3, 4, 5 *passim*.

reproduction of Romanesque architecture. The result is full of encouragement, in this particular view.¹⁸ It is not to be supposed that the sculptor deliberately laid aside any part of his technical equipment, or modeled less well than he knew how. And yet the architectural appropriateness of his work is not less striking than its merit as sculpture. It is indeed a Gothic revival in spirit, and puts to shame the work of those "Gothic sculptors" who have been insisting by their works that only stiff manikins and "stained glass attitudes," "both angular and flat," were really consonant with the traditions of Gothic architecture.

While, from the Gothic point of view, the evolution of structure constitutes the history of architecture, and the exposition of the construction, in any particular building, constitutes the architecture of that building, it would be impracticable and unjust to hold the Gothic revivalist to too strictly a logical account for all his details. What, for example, is the "function" of a crocket, or, as it most frequently occurs in modern work, of a gargoyle? It has, I believe, been attempted to be shown that the crocket was a facility for the mediaeval steeple-jack, though the modern steeple-jack, so far as I have observed his operations, when he has a spire to scale, is wisely wary of trusting himself to it. But, practically, it is evident that these two members, to which many more might be added, have no more "meaning" than the ailerons or cartouches of the Renaissance. They make the outline bristle. The designer introduces them because he likes the bristling effect which they produce, an effect which unquestionably belongs to the style of his choice. What we really have a right to require of him is only that when he has occasion to deal with a new structural device, he shall deal with it frankly to the best of his ability, and not dodge it or mask it under an application of irrelevant architectural forms denoting some other construction. When he descends to this, it is obvious that he has no ethical advantage, as the English Gothic revivalists, headed by Ruskin, put it, no logical advantage, as the French revivalists, headed by Viollet-le-Duc, characteristically preferred to put it, over the com-

¹⁸ Stanford White added a triple portal inspired by St. Gilles in 1903. It was given by the Cornelius Vanderbilt family to the third building for St. Bartholomew's, Madison Ave. and E. 44th St. (1871-1876, by Renwick & Sands; destroyed 1918, except for the portal incorporated in the present structure on Park Ave. between 50th and 51st Sts. built in 1917-1918 by Bertram Goodhue). Sculpture for the left portal by Herbert Adams; the central portal by Daniel Chester French and Andrew O'Connor; the right portal by Philip Martiny. For discussion and illustration, see Russell Sturgis, "A Fine Work of American Architectural Sculpture," *Architectural Record*, 15 (Apr. 1904), 293-311.

mon architectural practitioner who simply follows the fashion, and does not aspire to lead it. The whole question then resolves itself into one of taste, concerning which, proverbially, "non disputandum." This difference, by the way, between the French and English revivalists, is at once queer and illuminating. The attentive reader of the "Seven Lamps," on the one hand, and of the "Entretiens," on the other, cannot have failed to observe that whereas the English prophet condemns the things he does not like as eternally unrighteous, the French professor confines himself to pointing out that they are unreasonable. "Base," says Ruskin; "absurd," says Viollet-le-Duc. It is all very well for Emerson to say that Ruskin regenerated art, "as an appeal to moral order always must."¹⁹ But if the French revivalist had confined himself to precept, and refrained from the examples of actual design, which only showed his own lack of artistic tact, he would have had the greater effect upon the actual practitioners of architecture, who, if they are intelligent and honest men, feel less the necessity of being "converted" than that of being enlightened.²⁰ . . .

One of the best criteria of the talent and the training of a modern architect we may take to be his proved capacity for producing a work which, though of no historical style, yet has style. The heir of all the ages is necessarily, one would say, an eclectic. He must, if he be in earnest, find dispositions and devices suitable to his purpose beyond the limits of the historical style which he may have proposed to himself. When he attempts to introduce these, however, he finds it as difficult to retain "style" or to regain it, as he finds it easy by staying within the prescribed limits in which not only the formal elements, but the permissible combinations and permutations were exhausted generations before he was born. But so long as he confines himself to working in styles he is composing in a dead language and in effect acknowledging that architecture is a dead art. How to find new expressions for new notions—in this case for new materials and new modes of construction—and still to keep the effect of purity and unity, this is the problem to be solved before architecture becomes again a living art. It is a problem which presents itself to the worker in free architecture alone, since it is shirked by the worker in styles on the one hand, who excludes the

¹⁹ Reference unlocated.

²⁰ Reference to Viollet-le-Duc's own designs for a metal and masonry architecture of the future; see above, pp. 33f.

novelties, and by the engineer, on the other, who introduces them freely but without any care what the result looks like or what kind of figure he may be cutting as an artist. It is for the reason that mediaeval architecture furnishes so much more help than classic, which furnishes none at all towards the solution of this problem, that it is rationally advocated as the starting point of future work.

A Great American Architect: Leopold Eidlitz²¹

1. *Ecclesiastical and Domestic Work*

Leopold Eidlitz died in New York, March 22, 1908, having for a year and a half, since the death of Frederick Diaper, enjoyed, or at least held, the melancholy distinction of the "dean" of his guild in New York, and probably in the United States. His active career, from the building of St. George's, in 1848,²² covered almost half a century—an active and fruitful half-century in the history of American architecture. He might almost have said, paraphrasing Grattan²³ on the Irish Parliament, that he had rocked the cradle of the Gothic revival and that he had followed its hearse. The time when he began was the time when the Gothic revival was beginning to enlist most of the intellect and a still larger share of the enthusiasm of American architects, as it continued to do for many years. Counting in the Romanesque with the Gothic revival, one may say that it lasted for a full generation. It is a rather pathetic proof of the desuetude, innocuous or otherwise, into which it has fallen, that Professor Hamlin, enumerating, in the *Architectural Record* the other month, the best-deserving of American architects, quite forgot to include the name of Upjohn, whom, just about a generation ago, the "American Architect," then at its beginning, acclaimed as "the Father of American architecture."²⁴

²¹ A three-part article, *Architectural Record*, 24 (Sept. 1908), 164–179; (Oct. 1908), 277–292; (Nov. 1908), 365–378. Only slightly excerpted. On Eidlitz, see also Brooks, "Leopold Eidlitz"; reference on p. 21n.

²² See immediately below. Frederick Diaper (1810–1905).

²³ Henry Grattan (1746–1820), the famous Irish patriot, speaking of the short-lived Irish Constitution (1782–1800).

²⁴ Schuyler may refer to the opening remarks in A. D. F. Hamlin, "The Influence of the École des Beaux Arts on Our Architectural Schools," *Architectural Record*, 23 (Apr. 1908), 241f. At least nothing else by Hamlin seems relevant.

*Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi; sed omnes illacrimabiles
Urgentur ignotique longa
Nocte, —*²⁵

Let the present chronicler, far as he is from Horace's requirement of a "vates sacer," do what he can to rescue one of them. At least a survey of a career so typical ought to have its interest.

* * *

Mr. Eidlitz was born in Prague, March 29, 1823. He never forgot his birthplace. Reminiscences of the Moldau kept recurring in his work by the Hudson. As the towers of the Dry Dock Savings Bank and of the Clergy House of St. George's and such lesser erections as the "institutional" top of a commercial building survive to attest, he remembered, "super flumina Babylonis," the picturesque "Pulverthurm" and the picturesque bridge head of his native city, even though combined with reminiscences of the Nassauerhaus in Nuremberg.²⁶ These things came back to him as admissible motives in far different erections. His schooling, after he had outgrown the available facilities of Prague, was transferred to the Vienna Polytechnic, but it was not yet a distinctly architectural education. There is and long has been a specially close connection in Vienna between the science and the art of building, elsewhere so harshly divorced to their mutual disadvantage. There the "Society of Architects and Engineers" is a single institution. Certainly no builder of our times has striven more earnestly and persistently than Mr. Eidlitz to reunite the two, as they were united in the Middle Ages, to base architecture upon science and to infect engineering with art. But he did not resort to Vienna to study architecture. He was destined or had destined himself to the calling of a land-steward, within whose jurisdiction might come the erection of sundry humble and utilitarian classes of buildings called for in the administration of an estate. It was while engaged in learning how to do these that his imagination took fire at the possibility opened before him of doing worthier and larger things.

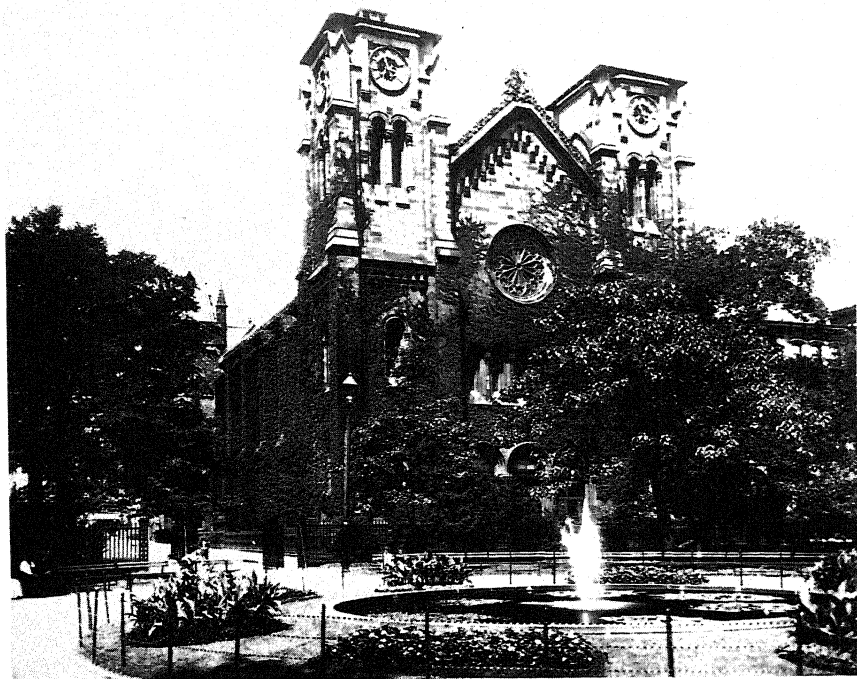
From the time when this possibility opened upon him, he was

²⁵ "There lived brave men before Agamemnon, and many; but all unwept are buried by endless night [because they lacked the sacred bard (*vates sacer*)]." Horace, *Odes*.

²⁶ Pulverthurm, or Powder Tower, (begun 1475) by Matyáš Rejsek, a tower with gate separating the old city from the newer. Charles Bridgehead, see below, p. 355n. Nassauerhaus, Nuremberg (begun fifteenth century).



Fig. 17. Blesch & Eidlitz. St. George's Episcopal Church, New York City, 1846-1850. Above, the fire of 1865, showing original towers; on facing page, view of 1890 showing present condition.



already in intention an architect. He was not yet quite come to his majority when, in 1843, he landed in New York, and he hastened to offer his draughtsmanship to the local architect whose work most appealed to him. Necessarily, in view of his endowment and his equipment, this was Richard Upjohn.

Trinity,²⁷ the first and still so far from the worst of the monuments of the Gothic revival, was already well under way, and the drawings for it all done, but the young Bohemian found some work in the office of the Anglican architect. He could not in any sense be described as Upjohn's pupil. He never assimilated the "Anglican" architectural tradition.²⁸ But he never, to the day of his own death, ceased to regard his first and only American "patron" with affectionate veneration. The employment was not of long duration, for a "Gothic" opportunity

²⁷ See above, p. 100n.

²⁸ On the "'Anglican' architectural tradition," see above, p. 132n. On Upjohn's Anglicanism, see Everard M. Upjohn, *Richard Upjohn, Architect and Churchman* (New York, 1929), *passim*.

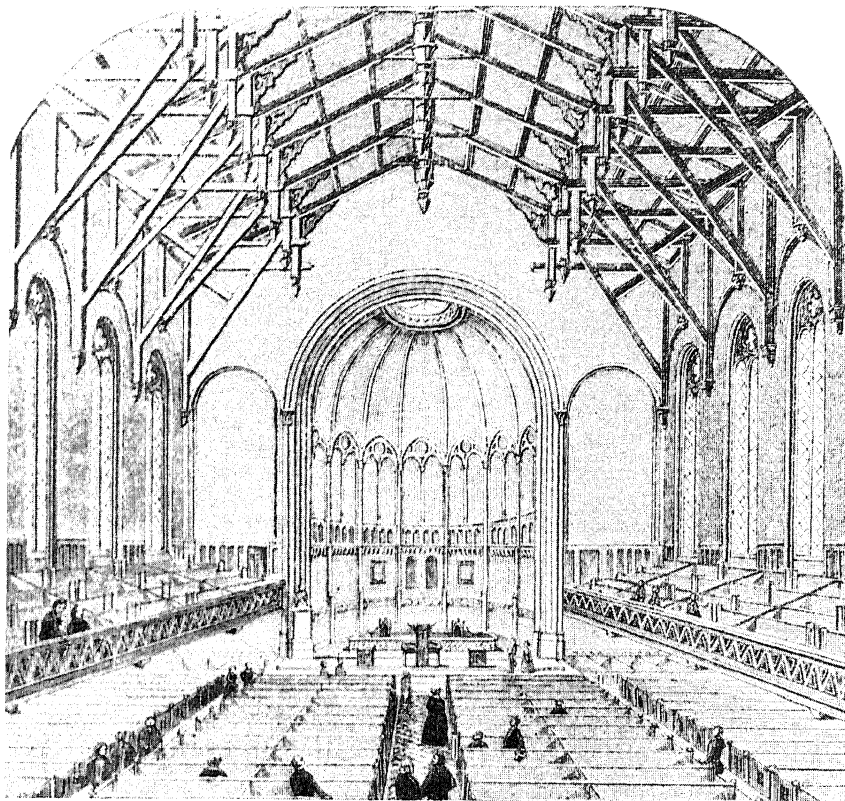


Fig. 18. Original interior, St. George's Church.

presented itself in the new St. George's,²⁹ migrating from Beekman Street to Stuyvesant Square, and the firm of Blesch and Eidlitz, a young Bavarian and a young Bohemian, was formed, very likely "ad hoc" [Figs. 17, 18]. I think they did nothing else together, and their co-operation in this did not go beyond the preparation of the drawings. As to these, the junior partner long afterwards declared that it was

²⁹ † St. George's Episcopal Church (1846-1848; spires in open work masonry added 1856; fire 1865 destroyed roof and interior; rebuilt 1867 generally following original plans but with supports for previously bracketed galleries; spires weakened by fire demolished 1889) by (Otto) Blesch & Eidlitz. Parish House (1888) by Leopold Eidlitz; Schuyler attributed this to Cyrus Eidlitz in "Cyrus L. W. Eidlitz" (1896-B). Cyrus Eidlitz may indeed have had a large share in its design, but all church records give the building to his father. The magnitude of the undertaking is evident with the realization that, according to a brochure on the church, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine is the only New York church with a higher interior space.

difficult to apportion the credit. "The exterior was mainly his, the interior mainly mine." But the senior partner fell ill and was disabled almost immediately, and the work was entirely executed under the superintendence of the junior, who was the only architect of the church recognized by its authorities and in relation with them. But without doubt the brief association was of great advantage to him. Blesch, a Grand Prix of Munich, had the regular architectural training which the junior partner lacked, but the results of which his eager and studious mind soon absorbed. Both partners were penetrated with enthusiasm for the South German phase of the Gothic or more properly the Romanesque revival.³⁰ Evidently enough German, the result of their labors was, and in sharp contrast to, the Anglicanism of Trinity. Evidently successful the result still is, though the front has long since lost the open spires which were its crowning ornament, and which were taken down some twenty years ago, after a fire which had compelled the reconstruction of the interior. A spire of any kind in solid masonry was rare enough in New York sixty years ago. Very likely Trinity offered the only other specimen. But the slender crocketed cone of Trinity was a familiar and well-precedented form, compared with these bold skeletons of stone. The rear is quite as successful in its way as the front, after the form so copiously precedented in the parent style, though the immediate prototype appears to be the apse of Trier. The sides, on the other hand, suffer from a monotony which seems to have been entirely avoidable. The simple "hallenartige" lay-out of the interior³¹ as a large undivided room, besides being economical, may very likely have been due to the insistence of the rector that it should be "evangelical." For Dr. Tyng³² was an insistent "evangelical," to whom a church was primarily a meeting house, a place in which to preach and to be preached to, or even at. Long drawn aisles and fretted vaults did not conduce to this function, nor perhaps the transepts which his architect

³⁰ On the influence of the German Romanesque (*Rundbogenstil*) on American architecture, see Carroll L. V. Meeks, "Romanesque Before Richardson in the United States," *Art Bulletin*, 35 (Mar. 1953), 17-33.

³¹ Reference to the German *Hallenkirche*, where nave and aisles are of equal height, in contrast to the high nave and low aisles characteristic of French medieval churches. The unified roof plane, together with the piers that tend to be separated more widely than in French churches, give the German interiors an open hall-like appearance.

³² The Reverend Stephen Higginson Tyng (1800-1885), a vehement leader of the evangelical wing of the Episcopal Church, renowned for his pulpit oratory. Tyng was a leader in the Sunday School movement. While under his rectorship St. George's became the first New York church to establish mission chapels among the poor of the East Side.

never willingly omitted from any subsequent church. Moreover, they were objectionable as savoring of Popery, as very likely the nave and aisles of Trinity savored in his mind. His architect used long afterwards to tell how he insisted that his "communion-table" should not be mistakable for an "altar." "Make me a table, do you understand, a table that I can walk around and see under." Especially the good Evangelical had no more use for supports encumbering the floor and obstructing vision than he had for storied windows richly shedding a dim religious light, and would not have such in his meeting house. As a result he got, as the church was originally built, hanging galleries supported by bracketing anchored into the buttresses, though, as reconstructed after the fire, slender posts were substituted for the brackets. As first built, these galleries, which were of Mr. Eidlitz's devising and design, constituted an interior feature as novel and startling in its way as the exterior feature of the open spires. But these galleries were of such importance that they really demanded exterior expression by a subdivision of those tall undivided windows of the flank which entail upon it its monotony. Evidently the monotony would have been relieved effectively by a subdivision of the windows, with a double or even a single opening under the gallery and the undivided window above it. Such a division would have removed the chief architectural blemish on what is and would be even with worse faults, one of our most seemly and dignified New York churches, inside and out.

* * *

The popular success of St. George's was immediate and striking and with that success the young architect found himself fairly launched as a Gothic practitioner. In 1850 and for years afterwards, to be a Gothic architect was to be a church architect. Richard Upjohn himself, the pioneer of Gothic, when he had a secular building to do, as in the old Trinity Building and the old Corn Exchange Bank, lapsed into some mild and discreet mode of the Renaissance.³³ But nobody ever accused Leopold Eidlitz of lacking the courage of his convictions. "Gothic," he used to maintain, "is adequate to every expression," and he strove to "make it so." I remember Joseph Sands, of Renwick and Sands, himself

³³ Trinity Building, 111 Broadway (1851-1852, demolished), and Corn Exchange Bank, Williams St., (1854-1855; demolished) both by Richard Upjohn; ill. in Upjohn, *Upjohn*, fig. 91.

a convinced Gothickist and author of such a home of ritual as St. Alban's,³⁴ saying to him, "I don't believe you could design a Corinthian capital." The rejoinder, though but of a word, cannot be done justice to without capitals—"DESIGN!" And, in one of the discussions with Richardson to which I was privileged to listen, he designated the essential difference between classic and mediaeval work by saying that whereas in the former you had a building with architecture adjoined to it, "in true Gothic, so long as you find two stones together, you find architecture. . . ."

But in those earliest days, he found no client to help him realize his dreams, and perforce did churches. He did some thirty of them, more, he mentioned once, than he did houses. In those days, indeed, hardly anybody thought of invoking an architect for a city house. Almost everybody was content with a ready-to-live-in habitation. It was only in suburban and country houses that the architect came in at all. It seems to me that I have already told in these columns, without his name, how Mr. Eidlitz once did a house near Bridgeport for Barnum, a house long since consumed by fire, a house for which the drawings were ordered through an agent, in which the architect undertook the architectural expression of Humbug, mainly in lath and plaster, and succeeded, as he found on visiting the executed work long after, beyond his wildest dreams.³⁵ In the same spirit of mischief which had inspired the design, he rang the doorbell, which was answered by the showman in person. The visitor, professing admiration for the edifice, inquired the name of the architect, and was informed that the architecture was the result of a cosmopolitan competition, had cost the showman \$10,000. "No it didn't," retorted the actual designer, whereto the showman, with a presence of mind which at once explained and justified his success in humbug, softly queried, "Is your name Eidlitz?"

³⁴ St. Albans, Lexington Ave. near E. 47th St., (1869; parish discontinued 1881, becoming successively the Church of the Epiphany and the Chapel of the Heavenly Rest until 1902; demolished sometime after this date) by Joseph Sands (died 1880), later a partner of James Renwick.

³⁵ P. T. Barnum (1810-1891), the circus impresario, was captivated during a trip to England by John Nash's Oriental Brighton Pavilion (1787), built for George IV. He asked a London architect to reproduce the pavilion. Then, fortified with these drawings, he sought out an American architect—Eidlitz as it turned out—to make an equally fantastic equivalent as a domed and minaretted admixture of Byzantine, Moorish, and Saracenic forms. Barnum bought land near Bridgeport, Conn., for this house in 1846 and moved into it in 1848. It was destroyed by fire in 1857. Ill. in M. R. Werner, *Barnum* (New York, 1923), opp. p. 106.

In such domestic work as he did seriously and not, like the lath domes of "Iranistan," in a spirit of hilarity or of mockery, he took for his prototype the Swiss chalet as the highest development of timber construction, superposing the timberwork on a basement of rough stone or of half-timbered construction with brickwork, once at least, in the pretty cottage at Englewood combining all three with an excellent effect. Of the half-timbered construction illustrated in the other cottage in New Jersey³⁶ he related that he once designed a house, I think in Springfield, Mass., and on visiting the result long afterwards found that the ingenious Yankee carpenter had saved himself trouble by building a brick house and tacking on the timber framework by way of applied ornament. An interesting example of mere carpentry is the Hamilton Ferry House in Brooklyn,³⁷ still standing after more than half a century, but shorn of much of its original effect by the removal of the more decorative features of the interior, and especially by repainting the interior in equable drab, where originally the construction had been effectively emphasized by the application of color. Even in its present partly dismantled and partly obliterated state, the ferry house is an effectively picturesque object with its very bold timber hoods projecting over the slips on the water front, and its triplet of gables and emphatic framing on the land front. It is not praising it highly enough to say that it remains the most interesting, architecturally, of the ferry houses, whether its successors have been overlaid by concealing coats of shingles or of sheet-metal, and tormented into a factitious picturesqueness by the addition of superfluous features. Another rather remarkable piece of carpentry is the timber roof of a hundred feet clear span, with which, many years later, he covered Tompkins Market,³⁸ after two previous roofs had failed. All these works were expositions of the mechanical facts of the case, as indeed was the case with his work in general, whatever the material. But the

³⁶ † Both cottages dated about 1860. An Eidlitz cottage in the wooden chalet style appears in Antoinette Downing and Vincent Scully, Jr., *The Architectural Heritage of Newport* (Cambridge, Mass., 1952), plate 169. Eidlitz's own house, a coloristic brick structure with chalet features nestled in a sylvan setting on Riverside Dr. at 86th St., appears in "Cyrus L. W. Eidlitz" (1896-B, p. 412).

³⁷ † Hamilton Ferry House, Brooklyn, N.Y., (c. 1858; demolished) appears from Schuyler's indistinct photograph to have been one of Eidlitz's boldest and most fantastic ventures in wood.

³⁸ This construction must have been realized prior to 1856, because the market was demolished in this year for a new three-story iron market by Bogardus & Lafferty. See Isaac N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island* (New York, 1915-1928), 5, 1865.

skeletonizing facilitated by an expressive treatment of wood, as of metal, makes the exposition more immediately apprehensible than in masses of masonry. While the Church of the Holy Trinity, at Madison Avenue and Forty-second Street,³⁹ still stood, and while its organist, Mr. Samuel P. Warren, was giving recitals on the excellent instrument therein, an unmusical auditor observed, "I would rather hear a lecture on that roof," the roof being, as we shall see, the chief feature of the interior. That remark would have saddened or irritated the architect, who would have thought his work a failure if it did not "lecture on" itself. On the other hand, going with him once to look at the decoration of the Union League Club,⁴⁰ when that decoration was new and a lion, I remarked the treatment of the king-posts in the ceiling of the dining room as columns with capitals and bases complete, as looking somehow wrong. The rational architect's comment was: "To appreciate the entire iniquity of the arrangement, you are to bear in mind that that member is not a compression-piece, but a tension-piece."⁴¹

* * *

But about the church-building. The impulse to the Gothic revival in this country came from the Protestant Episcopal Church, and was necessarily "Anglican." The Anglican tradition meant little to a German, for whom its associations did not exist, nor much, comparatively, to a logician, who naturally and necessarily rated its historical examples below those of France and of the great German example which carried the logic of Gothic to its uttermost development. Accordingly the early churches of Eidlitz became, and I find remain, rather rocks of offense to the Anglicans. The very success of St. George's designated its author as the architect of the Evangelicals rather than of the Ecclesiastics. One of its earliest successors, St. Peter's, Westchester, completed in 1853,⁴² might be supposed to be a "churchly" church. But the insistence upon the transeptual arrangement, and the insistence upon height, even at the expense of other dimensions, would discommend it to the Anglican, with his preference for the "long drawn aisle,"

³⁹ See immediately below.

⁴⁰ See below, p. 469n.

⁴¹ The offensive construction appears in *Harper's Weekly*, 25 (Feb. 19, 1881), 116. The break at this point, and all other breaks in the Eidlitz series, are Schuyler's unless otherwise noted.

⁴² St. Peter's Westchester, 2500 Westchester Ave., New York (1853; burned 1877; rebuilt 1877-1879, sympathetically but with a new design by Cyrus Eidlitz; extant).

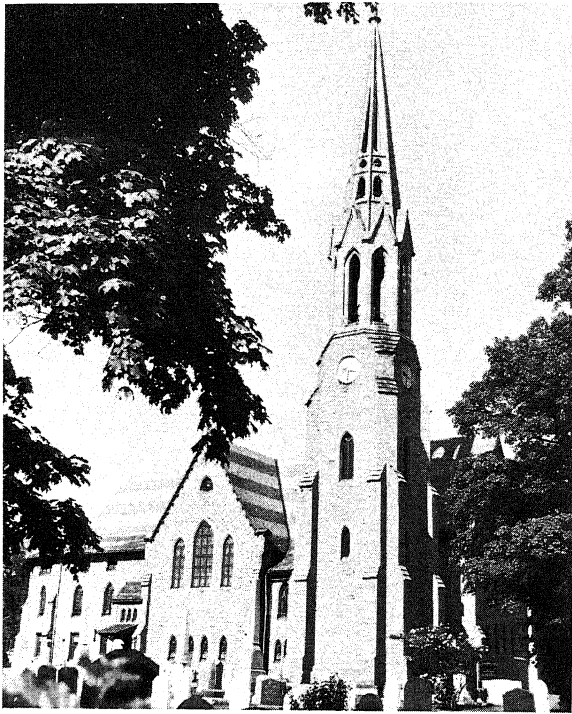


Fig. 19. Leopold Eidlitz. Second Congregational Church, Greenwich, Conn., 1856-1859.

especially for a country parish church, and these attributes are commonly to be found in the works of the architect. The open timbered ceiling of Christ Church in St. Louis,⁴³ doubtless his most successful church, is some 27 feet higher than the vaulted ceiling of Trinity in New York, which has a much greater length. St. Peter's has been partly rebuilt since, in consequence of a fire, though most sympathetically, and by the architect's own son. Otherwise, or even so, I should be

⁴³ † Christ Church Cathedral, 13th and Locust Sts., St. Louis, Mo. (foundations and cornerstone, 1859-1860; interrupted by Civil War; completed 1867; tower presumably following Eidlitz's design and new entrance, 1910; reredos in chancel 1912 by Harry Hems of Exeter, England). Christ Church became the cathedral of its diocese in 1888. See *The Report of the Centennial* (St. Louis, 1919), published by the Cathedral. The Cathedral was built during the rectorship of The Very Reverend Montgomery Schuyler, who culminated forty-two years of service to this church by becoming Dean of the Cathedral. Montgomery Schuyler was named for The Very Reverend Montgomery Schuyler, a first cousin and devoted friend of Montgomery's father, The Reverend Anthony Schuyler.

glad to show here a photograph of it. But the Congregational Church at Greenwich, Conn., to which the ecclesiological tradition does not apply, an erection of 1857,⁴⁴ I am able herewith to exhibit, as it looks in the summer of 1908 [Fig. 19]. When I first saw it, more than a generation ago, and had no means of determining its authorship, excepting "infallible inference," it struck me by its indigenous and homegrown and vernacular aspect. In spite of the unmistakably academic, German academic, window traceries, the general treatment, even the treatment of the open spire was, and is, so unacademic. It seemed as if an inspired village mason, aided, or even possibly impeded, by a manual of German geometric Gothic, had piled up stone, in straightforward pursuance of "a refined building purpose." And so it strikes me again when revisited for the purpose of this article. One might possibly detect in the renunciations of the finished work, the point of its author's remark upon Mr. Upjohn's design of the Church of the Pilgrims, in Brooklyn, to which he himself made a picturesque addition: ⁴⁵ "He did it conscientiously, upon the ground that Presbyterians were not entitled to architecture." But one prefers to think not. It is more to the point to remark that the design shows no intention of conforming to the surroundings, must, indeed, have seemed more incongruous with the Greenwich of 1857 than it seems with the Greenwich of 1908. So large and massive a church was a great undertaking for Greenwich half a century ago. There is, just beyond this Congregational church, a very typical and extremely pretty Episcopal church, contemporary with it, from the designs of one of the most accomplished of the Anglican revivalists, Mr. Frank Wills,⁴⁶ almost the perfection of an English parish church. The contrast is instructive. The Anglican edifice nestles in the valley. The Teutonic presentation of Congregationalism domineers from the hill, with excellent effect in its own

⁴⁴ † Second Congregational Church, Greenwich, Conn. (1856-1858; spire completed 1859; extant). Brooks, "Eidlitz," has located another and comparable church (1849-1854; extant), also Congregational, in New London, Conn. The interior of the New London church is far bolder than its Greenwich successor.

⁴⁵ Church of the Pilgrims, now Our Lady of Lebanon Roman Catholic Church, cor. Henry and Remsen Sts., (1844-1846) by Richard Upjohn. Ill. in Meeks, *Art Bulletin*, 35, opp. p. 20. A parish house addition, date uncertain, appears to be by Eidlitz. On Richard Upjohn's reservation of his most elaborate version of the Gothic for Episcopalian churches, see Upjohn, *Upjohn, passim*, but esp. chap. 5.

⁴⁶ Christ Church; information unavailable on Wills' building, which was replaced by a larger edifice in 1909-1910.

way, which is not at all the way of the other. Mr. Eidlitz's work has lately been extended by Mr. Tubby through the addition of a chapel at the rear,⁴⁷ and in a very skillful and sympathetic way. And there are very few towns of the size of Greenwich which have three churches so well worth looking at in their several kinds, as these two, and a third designed by Mr. Cady for the Presbyterian worship.⁴⁸ The old Tabernacle in Broadway⁴⁹ was, as to its exterior, perhaps entitled to higher praise than that of solid dignity. The interior, however, before its reconstruction by the removal of the columns, had interest and character. In fact, Mr. Eidlitz's interiors, especially his church interiors, were almost sure to be more interesting than the outsides. One of them never lacked some terminal feature focus and cynosure to draw the eye. In the case of the Tabernacle, this was an elaborate erection in carved oak framing and including the pulpit.

Christ Church in St. Louis, afterwards the Episcopal Cathedral, is in effect contemporary with these, since the plans were drawn and accepted in 1859, though the exigencies of a border city in war-time did not allow of the completion of the church before 1867. This, you will perceive, is of a very different inspiration from the others, even from that other which is of the same denomination, being primarily ecclesiastical, not primarily evangelical. Naturally, it gains correspondingly in effect, having the cathedral complement of nave and aisles and transepts and clerestory, and the open timber ceiling expected, being carried out in solid masonry. The Anglicans joined in the acclamation of this work as a brilliant success, including so impeccably Anglican a critic as Charles Kingsley, who found it "the most churchly" church he had seen in America.⁵⁰ When it was built it had no superior in the country, and no rival in the West, as it cannot have

⁴⁷ Chapel addition to the Second Congregational Church (1906-1907) by William B. Tubby (1858-1944).

⁴⁸ First Presbyterian Church (dedicated 1887; renovated 1956) by Cady, Berg & See. The well-preserved Congregational, the violently renovated Presbyterian, and the rebuilt Episcopal churches still stand within a few blocks of one another on E. Putnam St.

⁴⁹ Broadway Tabernacle Congregational Church, 6th Ave. and W. 34th St. (completed 1859; remodeled 1872 by J. Stewart Barney; demolished). Ill. in *King's Handbook of New York City* (Boston, 1873), p. 384; remodeled version in "American Towers" (1910-I, p. 315).

⁵⁰ Kingsley's remark was apparently made in conversation, and Schuyler may have heard of it either directly or in a letter from his "uncle." (See above, p. 146n.) Kingsley visited the U.S. on a lecture tour in 1874, the year before his death. From around May 3 to 9 he was in St. Louis, where The Very Reverend Montgomery Schuyler was among his hosts. See Robert Bernard Martin, ed. *Charles Kingsley's American Notes* (Princeton, N.J., 1958).

many rivals yet. Without doubt it is its author's masterpiece in the stricter kind of church architecture, a piece of skillful and scholarly Gothic in which the scholarliness by no means excludes individuality.

In quite another kind, being a reversion to the evangelical "auditorium," and a much more radical version than any of its predecessors, was the Church of the Holy Trinity, at Madison Avenue and Forty-second Street, in New York [Figs. 20, 21].⁵¹ The rector of Holy Trinity was the son and namesake of the rector of St. George's, was that Stephen H. Tyng, Jr., even "lower" than the senior of that ilk, of whom a ribald said, the time he resigned his charge to take an insurance agency in Paris, that this transition from fire to life insurance was startlingly sudden. His congregation had for some years worshipped in a very pretty little wooden cottage ornée by Wray Mould on the same site when Mr. Eidlitz was commissioned to supplant it with a larger and more durable auditorium. The demand for "auditoriums" had infected much more "churchly" congregations, for it was just about then that the elder Upjohn had taken the octagon of Ely as the prototype for the new St. Thomas's⁵² upon the ground that a congregation, or rather an audience, could be better "accommodated" in that form than in the long drawn aisle. Mr. Eidlitz's solution was much more radical. He devised, as he put it, "a theatre with ecclesiastical details." The ground plan of his auditorium was an ellipse, appearing, or rather not appearing, in a piece of elliptical wall on one side, the outwardly invisible north side, but elsewhere inscribed in the parallelogram of the site, sometimes tangent to the outer walls and

On this cathedral, Rev. George W. Shinn, *King's Handbook of Notable Episcopal Churches in the United States* (Boston, 1889), p. 263, comments that the building is all of cut stone and there is "not a sham in it"; ill. with cuts of both exterior and interior.

⁵¹ † Church of the Holy Trinity, Madison Ave. at E. 42nd St. (1870 and 1875; demolished). The violent colorism of the structure earned it the sobriquet of the Church of the Homely Oilcloth. The Reverend Stephen H. Tyng, Jr. (1839-1898), son of the famous rector of St. George's, was even more evangelical than his father. So "low church" was he that he was censured by the Episcopal Church for his preaching to Methodists, and he even assisted Moody and Sankey in their revival of 1875. He abandoned the pulpit after 1881, to become a prominent insurance executive, eventually heading the Paris office of his firm.

⁵² St. Thomas Church, NW cor. 5th Ave. and 53rd St., (1868-1870; rectory 1872-1873; destroyed by fire 1905; replaced by the present Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson edifice) by Richard Upjohn. Ill. in Upjohn, *Upjohn*, figs. 102, 103. A more creative building than Upjohn's famous Trinity Church, it was widely regarded as his masterpiece, just as this singularly fortunate congregation later acquired what many regard as Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson's masterpiece. On the present St. Thomas', see below, pp. 598-604.

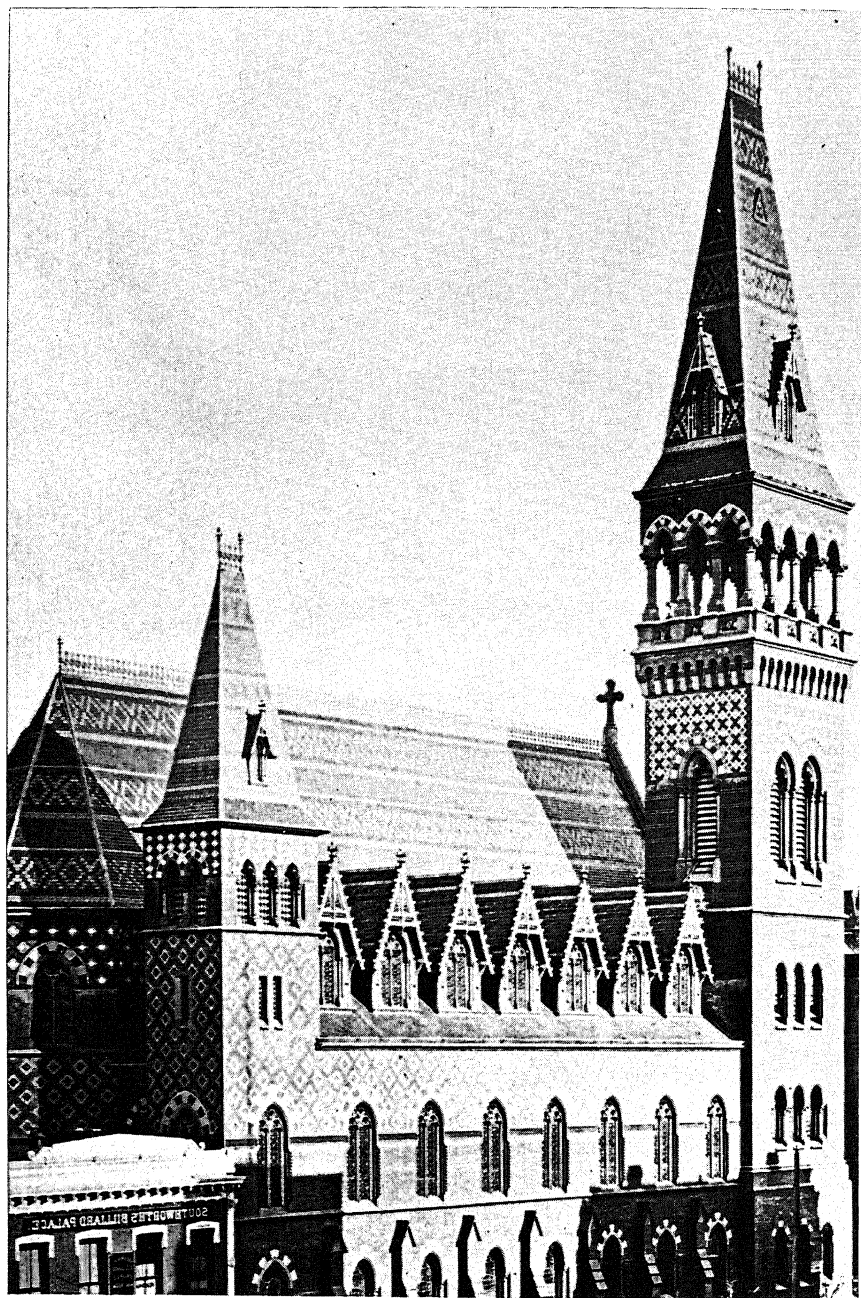


Fig. 20. Leopold Eidlitz. Church of the Holy Trinity, New York City, 1853.



Fig. 21. Tower of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Madison Ave.
at 42nd St., New York City.

sometimes marked by screens of columns. Of course the arrangement involved a failure of exterior expression, to which the architect found himself forced to submit. He had once schemed a double-apsed clere-story, such as some of the great Rhenish abbeys show, for a project for a new Plymouth Church for Beecher, a project which was finally quashed by the great preacher's saying, characteristically, "What's the use? After me, you'll get nobody to fill it."⁵³ Waiving the lack of cor-

⁵³ Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887), the fiery Congregationalist preacher and reformer, who attained the climax of his career after coming to Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, in 1847. Shortly after his arrival, the church burned (1849). It was replaced by a plain auditorium church, Orange St. bet. Hicks and Henry Sts., (1849-1850, extant) by J. C. Wells. The popularity of Beecher's preaching necessitated another competition for a building to seat 6,000 in 1858. Eidlitz submitted an unsuccessful design. Financial problems prevented the realization of the winning drawings by Charles Duggin, a New York architect. The competi-

respondence between the outside and the inside of the Church of the Holy Trinity, the result was an interesting exterior and a far more interesting interior. Since the curve of the auditorium left no walls for the clerestory to stand on, this was lighted by the tall dormers arranged in the roof itself, to the complication and the interest of which the framing of them much contributed. The roof was in fact carried from end to end of the longer axis of the ellipse by a great truss in timber on either side, which rested at the ends on massive granite piers, exhibited and decorated. As an auditorium, the interior was, I believe, entirely successful, while architecturally it was certainly impressive and even "churchly" in spite of the theatrical sweep of the galleries. It is sad to relate that, under a subsequent administration, the congregation went to work to reconstruct the interior, and even invited the original architect to submit plans for the reconstruction. He declined upon the ground that none of the things they wished to do was worth doing. Certainly none of the things they did was worth doing. They cut down the high windows of the apse, to the artistic destruction of that feature. They covered up with walnut mouldings the exposed granite piers which so distinctly asserted their function. In short they converted a construction full of purpose and character into a meaningless and characterless sham. And all this under the impression that they were making the interior "more Gothic," a pretension which the rector avowed in the address he made upon the completion of the alterations, and which denoted an insufficient sense of the distinction between the Goths and the Vandals. It was really a relief when the poor thing was put out of its misery by being demolished, though it is a pity that there is no photograph available which represents so interesting and so sadly misconceived an architectural achievement. The less interesting exterior expression of it is available. At once upon its completion the ever-ready New York nomenclator, the same who had dubbed Wray Mould's Unitarian Church in Fourth Avenue "The

tion drawings were discussed at a meeting of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, following a paper by Eidlitz on the problem of giving a "churchly" character to the auditorium church: *Crayon*, 6 (May 1858), 150f. See also *Crayon*, 6 (May 1859), 154-157, for the reprinting of the competition program—a classic statement for this kind of church, where Beecher wanted no pulpit, only a platform. For crude cuts of the Wells structure, see Lyman Abbott and Rev. S. B. Halliday, *Henry Ward Beecher: A Sketch of His Career* (Hartford, Conn., 1887), pp. 221, 225, 325. On the building history, see Noyes L. Thompson, *Plymouth Church, 1847-1872* (New York, 1873), especially pp. 65 and 98.

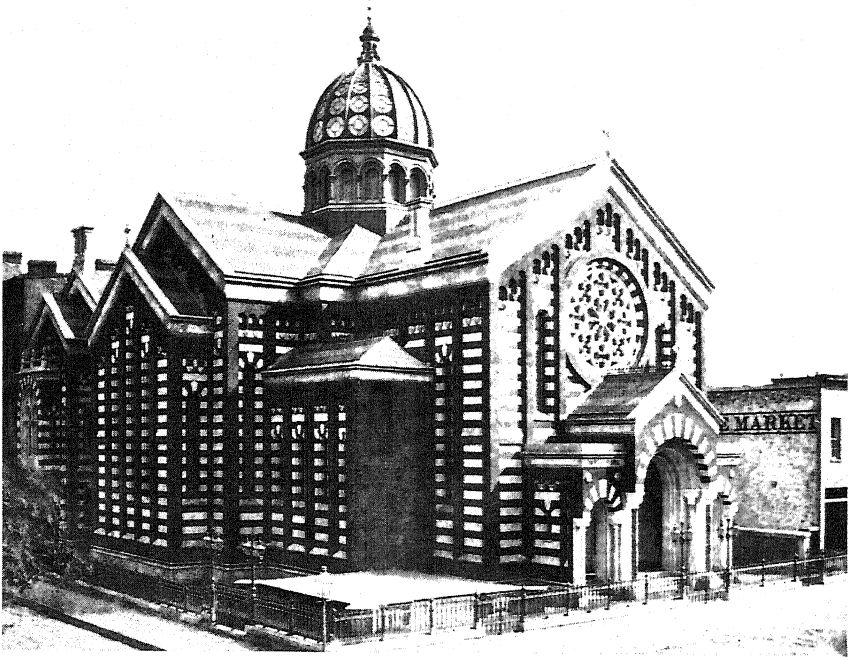


Fig. 22. Jacob Wray Mould. All Souls Unitarian Church, New York City, 1853-1855.

Church of the Holy Zebra" [Fig. 22],⁵⁴ or his legitimate successor, stigmatized it as "The Church of the Homely Oilcloth," and careless New York in general let it go at that. Wray Mould and Eidlitz, by the way, though antipodean in their respective attitudes towards life, and in everything else excepting their common love for Gothic architecture, were sympathetic even when competitive. I have just come across, in the file of "The Crayon," for 1856, an enthusiastic article by Eidlitz upon Wray Mould's design for the Unitarian Church, and another, from the same pen, on Wray Mould's design for that new church of Beecher's, enthusiastic artistically, though deeming R. M. Hunt's design the most practical meeting of the Plymouth Church require-

⁵⁴ All Souls Church, 4th Ave. at E. 20th St. (1853-1855) by Jacob Wray Mould (1825-1884). Schuyler consistently misspells Mould's name as "Wrey Mould."

ments.⁵⁵ And the respectable and responsible Bohemian greatly enjoyed a compliment from the Bohemian and irresponsible Anglican which was repeated to him: "Eidlitz is death on form; but I'm hell on color." "The Church of the Oilcloth," homely or otherwise, was as wide of the fact as most popular epigrams. The brick mosaic was as mere a detail in the mind of the designer of the later church as the striping in red and white had been in that of the earlier. Its novelty gave it an undue importance in the eyes of the casual beholder. In fact, it was entirely successful where it was removed far enough from the eye, as in the main tower and the apse, and even at the top of the smaller tower. But in the field of the side wall, by some optical illusion which the architect had not foreseen, the diaper of yellow, brown and blue, in juxtaposition to the field of the wall, produced a zig-zag which gave the look of confusion and weakness. This old photograph, by the presence of the one-storied shops in the foreground, which the irony of fate has preserved when what was so much better worth preserving has passed away, recalls that the architect of the church made an offer to the "Vanderbilt architect," the architect of the shops, the respectable but not illustrious Mr. Snook,⁵⁶ to design the shop fronts for nothing, in order to bring them into some sort of grouping with the church. The offer failed, but not by reason of any reluctance on the part of the other practitioner, only by reason of a pressure of time under which he could not accord the necessary "three weeks" for architecturalizing the shops and bringing them into relation with the church. A much more important project failed, with results we must still find deplorable, when, through a common friend, Mr. Eidlitz endeavored to transmit to Mr. Roebling, the engineer of the East River Bridge, an offer to model, gratuitously and out of pure interest in the great work, the towers of that structure.⁵⁷ The friend declined

⁵⁵ Schuyler erred on the date. "The Church of All Souls," *Crayon*, 5 (Jan. 1858), 20-22, notes the "Holy Zebra" sobriquet and observes that such violent colorism (of which Eidlitz approved) was new to New York at the time. For this reason alone the awkward structure merits reproduction. This strident Manhattan landmark was also popularly known as the "Beefsteak Church."

⁵⁶ Jonathan B. Snook (1815-1901). He was the "contractor" associated with the Herter Brothers in the building of the W. H. Vanderbilt houses, and the adjoining houses for two of Vanderbilt's daughters. He was the "architect" for the houses of two other daughters, Mrs. W. Seward Webb and Mrs. H. McK. Twombly, at 680 and 684 5th Ave. respectively. Most importantly, he obtained the commission for Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt's Grand Central Station (1871-1872).

⁵⁷ See above, p. 49.

to convey the proposal, fearing to wound the susceptibilities of the engineer. It was a great pity, for the work the architect volunteered to do was work he was pre-eminently qualified to do. If he had done it, the towers would not now stand as disgraces to the airy fabric that swings between them.

* * *

Still more "out of line" with the usual employments of a church architect, than the Church of the Holy Trinity, or than any Christian church or conventicle whatsoever, was the Jewish synagogue in Fifth Avenue,⁵⁸ which is the most conspicuous and probably the most meritorious of the works of its author which still stand in New York [Figs. 23, 24]. The convention that the architecture of a synagogue should be Oriental was already forty years ago fully enough established, but it had not resulted in many noteworthy works. It was at any rate, desirable that a synagogue should be distinguished from a Christian church, while yet Christian architecture contained what the architect of this synagogue regarded as the only available repertory of constructions suitable for so elaborate a work. The temple is an attempt accordingly to combine Gothic structure with Saracenic decoration, including in that term carved and moulded as well as colored ornament. It was a very bold attempt, but it was justified by the event. The

⁵⁸ † Temple Emanu-El, NE cor. 5th Ave. and 43rd St. (1866-1868; demolished 1927). Although Schuyler does not mention the fact, Eidlitz was apparently associated in this commission with Henry Fernbach (1829-1883), a member of the congregation; see Rachel Wischnitzer, *Synagogue Architecture in the United States* (Philadelphia, 1955), pp. 74-76. (For other New York synagogues by Eidlitz unmentioned by Schuyler, also see Wischnitzer. Incidentally, she asserts, p. 43, that Eidlitz was "probably the first Jewish architect in the United States.")

Schuyler's appraisal of Emanu-El in 1908 was far kinder than his initial review of the building in the *New York World*, Sept. 12, 1868, p. 7. In this early appraisal which marked his debut as an architectural critic, Schuyler opened his critique by attacking the eclecticism of the building. With the mixture of Christian cruciform plan and rose window plus Saracenic elements, the building did not express its function. The massing was poor, an agglomeration rather than a unity. The pinnacles were so insubstantial as to suggest that a wind might take them away, and the crowning feature of the front an "absurdity." For the rest, he generally admired the exterior detailing and, with minor reservations, the mixture of Saracenic and Gothic of the interior. As he opened his critique by suggesting that the church "at one jump has gone back to barbarism," so he closed it by praising it as a commodious and well built structure, although as a religious monument it was a "failure" and as a "good augury for American architecture, it is *nichts*." That Eidlitz could extend his friendship to the tyro critic after such a review sufficiently testifies to his objectivity. Rereading the review forty years later, Schuyler was rightfully embarrassed at its excesses (see below, p. 159), although the blemishes he pointed out in the early review complete his more lenient attitude in the late memorial.



Fig. 23. Leopold Eidlitz. Temple Emanu-El, New York City, 1866-1868.

attempt is proclaimed in the front, the setting of a nave of which the central feature is a rose window of Gothic tracery in a pointed recess between minareted towers, culminating its buttresses with minareted pinnacles, surmounting it with an arcade that is in effect an emphatic belt, and a hipped roof, instead of the gable that was to be expected,

and laying stress throughout on the horizontal and comparatively slurring the vertical lines which would have denoted it as Gothic. The emphasis is deepened by the wide space between the nave and its flanking towers, and by the extremely pretty flying bridges that connect them with it. There is an academic incongruity in all this, doubtless, but it is altogether of the letter, not at all of the spirit. The fusion of styles is real and complete, not only in the exterior, but in the interior where occur such technical incompatibilities as a regular round arched triforium amid Alhambresque decoration, and minarets crowned with Gothic foliated finials. The exterior is known to all New Yorkers, of course, but the interior is even better worth knowing. What was meant to be its culminating feature, the light gallery over the ark at the east end, lighted from invisible openings at its ends, is now marred of its original effect, being filled with organ pipes, which also produce a pretty effect, though by no means the effect the designer intended. The color decoration, however, which was not crude even when the temple was opened, has been delightfully mellowed since, by time, and, though in positive colors, it makes the intended effect of the resultant tint. "Some decorators mix colors in the pot," the architect used to say, "and others on the walls."⁵⁹ Doubtless in theory the juxtaposition of positive colors, producing the desired "tone," has the advantage of far more vividness and fire. George Inness once proposed to himself to paint landscape with the three primaries alone, though he was mercifully withheld from the actual attempt.⁶⁰ Seemingly it is in a large part a question of optics. To one eyesight the colors will blend at a distance from which, to another, they stand out in all their native crudity. But for most spectators this decoration in the Temple Emanu-El is very successfully blended. On the other hand those who remember the ceiling of the Assembly Chamber⁶¹ as it was [Fig. 28], remember that the density of the design was not sufficient to induce the blending, and that the colors remained crude in effect, in spite, or even in part because, of the relief which did undoubtedly enhance their liveliness.

⁵⁹ In *Nature and Function of Art*, pp. 322f, Eidlitz discusses his ideas on polychromatic architecture in detail, maintaining that the architect should use strong colors as a "mosaic" in which they are then blended optically.

⁶⁰ George Inness (1825-1894), the American landscape painter. Schuyler published a popular article on his work, "George Inness, The Man and His Work," *Forum*, 18 (Nov. 1894), 301-313, without, however, mentioning the projected experiment.

⁶¹ On the Assembly Chamber of the New York State Capitol, see below, pp. 175f.

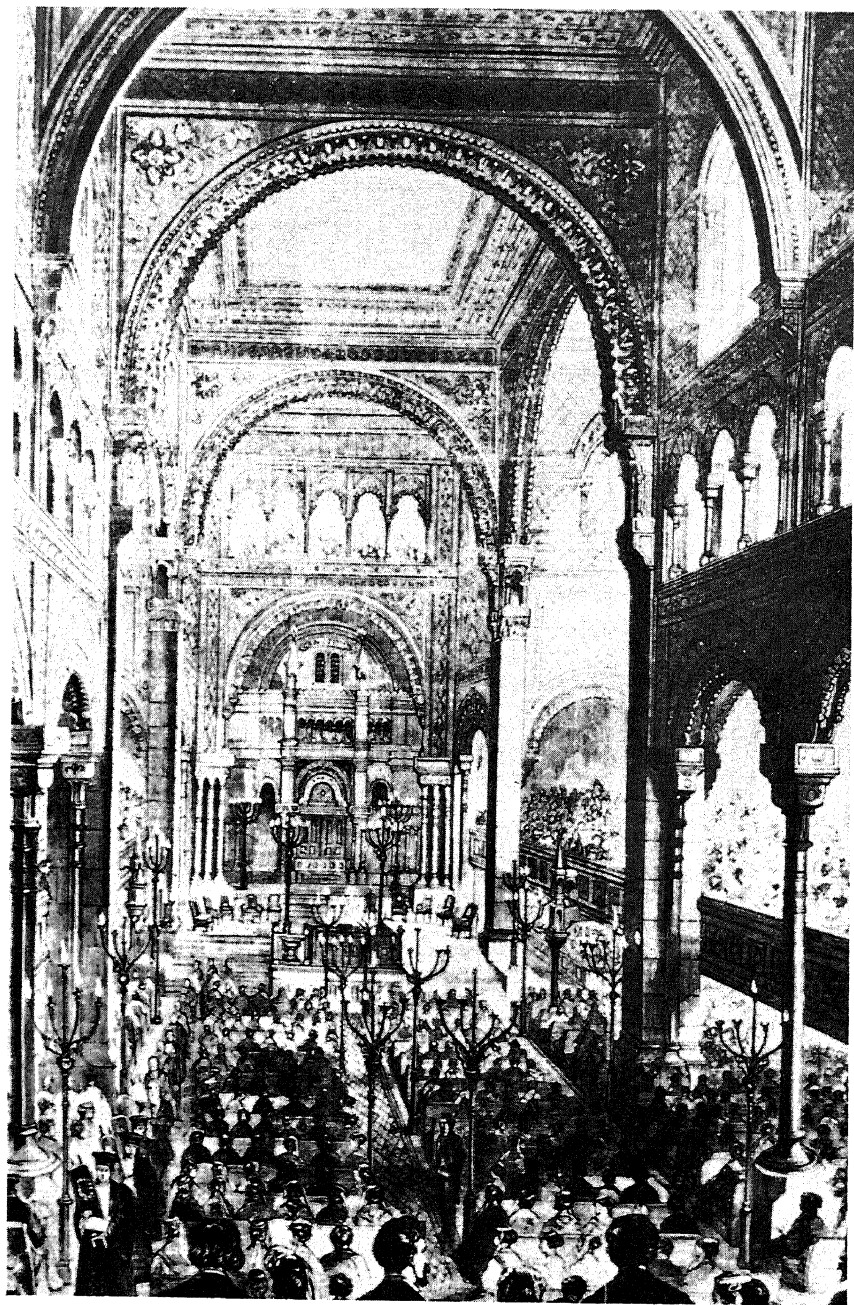


Fig. 24. Interior, Temple Emanu-El.

In the architect's own drawing-room, on the other hand, he made the experiment of giving force to the color by modelling the plaster in relief and here, on so much smaller a scale, with entire success, and with even a greater advantage to the life of the decoration than a fabric woven in colors has over one printed. In any case, the interior of the temple is a beautiful success, one of the most notable interiors in New York, while exteriorly the main entrance is one of the most interesting repertoires in New York of decorative detail and the porch at the rear one of the most picturesque and sketchable "bits."

2. *Commercial and Public*

That synagogue in Fifth Avenue, of which we have just been talking, is especially memorable to the present chronicler, because it led to his personal acquaintance with the author, about the most interesting acquaintance he has made in the whole course of his life. I was present at the dedication of the synagogue, just forty years ago. And I made it the occasion of my début in architectural criticism for the "World," with which I was connected; Manton Marble's "World," the Pre-Pulitzerian "World," "The World before the Deluge."⁶² "*Ne pas confondre.*" It was not a very good specimen of architectural criticism, I have to own, having just now read it over, but I can by no means regret it, since it led to a meeting, and that began in an altercation which became a friendship, and on my side a pupilage.

My obvious point of attack was the solecism of the cruciform plan for a synagogue, and I worked that for much more than it was worth. But I am glad to observe that the "effort" attested the hearty admiration for other and earlier works by the same author which the jaunty young critic felt. For the American Exchange Bank and the Continental Bank and the Produce Exchange and the Brooklyn Academy of Music were already standing, though they are all gone now; had been standing when he arrived from "up the State," prepared to be astonished and ravished by the architectural glories of New York, and found that for the most part they left him cold;⁶³ that it seemed to him,

⁶² See above, p. 4. Manton Marble owned the *World* from 1862 until 1872. In 1879 control of the paper went to Jay Gould, who sold it to Joseph Pulitzer in 1883, the year in which Schuyler abandoned the *World* for the *Times*.

⁶³ Reference to Schuyler's youthful move from Ithaca to New York in 1865.

though the phrase cannot have come in for a generation, that they were one and all "putting up a front." Even Trinity, which, as a youth of "Anglican" upbringing he was prepared unreservedly to admire, he found essentially in the same class with the Ionic colonnade of the Custom House ⁶⁴ further down Wall Street, a harmonious assemblage of forms which had been harmonized by secular association, a form language which was capable of being grammaticized by the very fact of being dead, an architecture of the past which bore no earnest of becoming an architecture of the future. But these few exceptional works attracted the novice "addicted to swearing to the words of no master," by the fact of reality and life. They seemed not to be historical evocations, but solutions of the present building problems in terms of the present, things made out of their own elements and for their own purposes, really bank, exchange or theatre, as the case might be, works that were of no style and that yet had style. "A thing has style," says Viollet-le-Duc, "when it has the expression appropriate to its uses." ⁶⁵ And, from this point of view, it was much in favor of these things that they were not "examples," like Trinity and like the Custom House. Be it remembered that they antedated, sometimes by a decade, sometimes by two decades, the few subsequent successes of secular Gothic, Mr. Wight's Academy of Design and Brooklyn Mercantile Library, Mr. Cady's Brooklyn Academy of Design, and, if you can call collegiate architecture secular, Mr. Haight's buildings for Columbia, and for the General Theological Seminary and Mr. Potter's for the Union Theological Seminary ⁶⁶ [Figs. 3, 6, 7, 15, 16, 126]. For,

⁶⁴ New York Custom House, Wall and Williams Sts., (1833-1840; extant as the first story of the National City Bank) by Isaiah Rogers (1800-1869). McKim, Mead & White completed their incorporation of Rogers' building into their bank in 1909; see Schuyler's article on the architectural amalgamation, "The Old New York Custom House and the New City Bank" (1908-I).

⁶⁵ Viollet-le-Duc, *Discourses*, ed. Van Brunt, 1, 1842; see also 177-183.

⁶⁶ See above, pp. 7n, 126n, and 128n. Old Campus of Columbia University, block bounded by Madison and Park Aves. and 49th and 50th Sts.; C. C. Haight (1841-1917) designed two buildings for the School of Mines (completed 1874), and Hamilton Hall (1880), as well as the Library (1884). Today all of these buildings have been demolished. Campus of the General Theological Seminary, block bounded by 9th and 10th Aves. and 20th and 21st Sts., (1883-1900; all extant, save for Hobart Library, Jarvis Hall, and the Deanery, which were demolished in 1959 for a new structure by O'Connor and Kilham) by C. C. Haight. A complete list of the many buildings by Haight for the General Theological Seminary and ills. appear in Rev. Theodore M. Riley, *A Memorial Biography of the Very Reverend Eugene Augustus Hoffmann* (Jamaica, N.Y., 1904), 2, 619-640, esp. 626; see also Schuyler, "The Work of Charles C. Haight" (1899-C). Union Theological Seminary, Park Ave. bet. 69th and 70th Sts., (1882-1884; all demolished) by William C. Potter (1842-1909) and James Lord Brown

long before the series of his ecclesiastical works were concluded, in fact, not very long after it was begun, the author of them had a chance to try his hand on secular buildings. Probably these problems were more welcome to him than the churches, in which, by the necessity of the case, tradition governed, even though, as we have seen, the prevailing Anglican tradition did not govern him, and he neither inherited nor really assimilated it. Reason was to him the guide of life, the guide in art. He knew no other. And the logical shortcomings of English Gothic, in comparison with "Continental," shortcomings which he took an unsparing pleasure in pointing out and analyzing, would have prevented him from taking that as a standard, especially from substituting for reason a traditional and hereditary "feeling" of which he himself did not partake. "By all means an architect ought to read Ruskin," he said once; "it helps him keep his enthusiasm." That was the value he set on "the most analytic mind in Europe." One sees why he should have worked more freely upon secular than upon ecclesiastical problems, necessarily of tradition as the latter so largely are. His whole lifework was devoted to what seemed to his mind the rationalization of architecture, and it was a remarkably clear and vigorous mind. He would perfectly have agreed with that bold literary reformer of architecture, Viollet-le-Duc, whom, characteristically, he found "too timid," that "we can bring the taste of this generation to perfection by making it reason."⁶⁷

* * *

His first essay in secular work, the American Exchange Bank, was contemporaneous, or almost so, with the Broadway Tabernacle, since destroyed.⁶⁸ As might be expected from what we have said, it is a far more important and pregnant work. It also had the distinction of being the first fireproof building erected for commercial purposes in New York, unless an exception be made of the then new and now

(1859-1902). The Union Theological complex consisted of a chapel, library, lecture hall, and dormitory.

⁶⁷ Viollet-le-Duc, *Discourses*, ed. Van Brunt, I, 22; see also I, 177-183; ed. Bucknall, 2, 112-118, 127f, 208, 288-291, 380.

⁶⁸ † American Exchange Bank, Broadway and Cedar St. (1857). For ill. and discussion, see W. Weisman, "Commercial Palaces of New York: 1845-1875," *Art Bulletin*, 36 (Dec. 1954), fig. 9 following p. 296.

doubly old and demolished Times Building.⁶⁹ The problem of the commercial building was so different then and now that the two things are incommensurable. Then the limit of ascension of the unassisted human leg fixed the height of a commercial building at five stories. An attical sixth, lighted from holes in the cornices, might be added for the so-called "accommodation" of the janitor's family, assumed to be immune from leg-weariness and incurious of the outer world. But then, as now, "the prayer of Ajax was for light,"⁷⁰ Ajax being the hypothetical tenant. Ajax wanted all the light there was, and more than could decently be afforded, compatibly with the aspect or the reality of solidity in the walls. His requirement can plainly be more easily fulfilled in a steel-framed building than in a building with real walls of masonry. The problem of the old-fashioned commercial architect, if he happened to be an artist, was to make his building look solid, and at the same time to satisfy the demands of Ajax. Nobody who saw the American Exchange Bank in course of demolition but will agree that its construction was characterized by great massiveness in fact. Its ruins looked Roman. Nobody who remembers its aspect "in life" will deny that it was characterized by great massiveness in appearance; yet, its architect used to point out, the proportion of voids to solids in its facades was greater than in the adjoining building on Broadway, the then abode of the Mutual Life, an effusion from the muse, perhaps of Kellum,⁷¹ at any rate a perfectly commonplace front which looked like a pasteboard screen, whereas the bank was an unmistakable mass of masonry. So far, the bank was a great success. But it was still more a success by the arrangement and the detail of its fenestration, which made it an architectural composition, and more yet by its crowning member, the beetling cornice in solid stone which would have seemed excessive at that time even in a sham of sheet metal. A visible roof the architect always insisted upon where he could get it. But where, as in these banks, it was clearly out of the question, he strove to compensate its absence by the most emphatic cornice he

⁶⁹ The original New York Times Building, 41 Park Row, (1857-1858) by Thomas R. Jackson was replaced by George B. Post's building on the same site (1888; now Pace Institute). Post's building was supplanted by the Times Tower, Times Square, (1902-1904) by Cyrus L. W. Eidlitz (1853-1921). Finally, newspaper operations were moved from the Tower to 229 W. 43rd St. in 1914.

⁷⁰ Longfellow, "The Goblet of Life."

⁷¹ Mutual Life Insurance Building, 140-146 Broadway, (1863-1865; demolished) by John Kellum (1809-1871).

could contrive. "Richardson," he exclaimed long afterwards, in the collaboration of the Capitol, "what that cornice of yours needs is not more height, but more projection and greater vigor of modelling." Projection and vigor of modelling were certainly not wanting to the cornice of these two banks.

Compared with anything that then stood on Broadway, the American Exchange Bank was a great advance. [Here Schuyler discusses a warehouse by "an ingenious and sensitive pilgrim from Cincinnati, Mr. James K. Wilson," who reproduced Eidlitz's design for the American Exchange Bank in his home city, and improved the design in the process.]

The Continental Bank was its author's second essay in commercial building [Fig. 25].⁷² There could be no question that, architecturally, the second showed a very great advance. The appearance of massiveness and solidity is common to both. And indeed the reality of those qualities everybody will agree. Mr. Sturgis not long ago in these pages gave a very interesting account of the treatment of the interior detail, and of the devices to which the architect resorted in a task in some respects unprecedented. The outcome was a framework of iron supports carrying ceilings of stone slabs, the supports and the soffits of the ceiling being decorated after their respective kinds. The effect was as satisfactory as it was novel and striking. It may still be seen, in spite of the demolition of the buildings in which it first appeared, in the interior of Mr. Eidlitz's addition to the Tweed Court House,⁷³ although here the supports and frames as well as the panels are of stonework. Gaertner's Bavarian revival of the Romanesque was, in some ways, the starting point of Eidlitz's architecture.⁷⁴ New York contains a

⁷² † Continental Bank (1856-1857; demolished). This bank was earlier than the American Exchange, a correction from Russell Sturgis which Schuyler himself accepted in a note published at the end of the series (p. 378). A search of the *Architectural Record* has not yielded the reference to Sturgis' article.

⁷³ † Addition to the New York City ("Tweed") Court House, City Hall Park at 52 Chambers St. (1867; extant). Eidlitz's Germanic Romanesque appendage to the rear of Kellum's Tuscan classicism (1861) is singularly inappropriate and, Schuyler notwithstanding, less impressive than the original building. Eidlitz's shabbily preserved courtroom, compartmentalized into nine square bays by arches in a single plane with flat ceilings, combines the recall of Mooresque structure with medieval detail. It contrasts markedly with the ample rectangular spaces of Kellum's neoclassicism. Eidlitz also lined the interior of the rotunda with coloristic brick work, which was later painted over, as Schuyler remarks immediately below.

⁷⁴ Friedrich von Gärtner (1792-1847). On the influence of the German Romanesque on American building, see above, p. 141n.

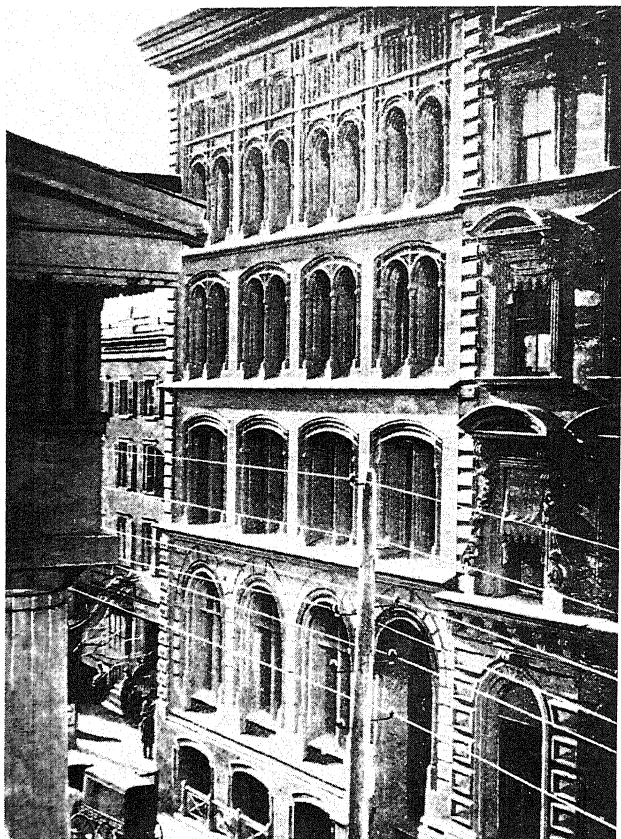


Fig. 25. Leopold Eidlitz. Continental Bank, New York City, 1856-1857.

tolerable specimen of it in the Astor Library of Alexander Saelzter, which dates from 1850.⁷⁵ Fergusson has criticised Gaertner's version of it, fairly enough, as "wanting eyebrows."⁷⁶ Nobody could criticise either of these buildings on that ground. Contrariwise they show what Ruskin, speaking of the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, calls "a solemn frown of projection." "A mere projecting shelf," adds Ruskin, "is not

⁷⁵ Astor Library, Lafayette Pl., (plans begun 1849; central section completed 1852; south wing 1854, when Library opened; extant) by Alexander Saelzter. North wing by Thomas Griffith, opened 1859. Sketch of original building in Harry Miller Lydenberg, *History of the New York Public Library* (New York, 1923), opp. p. 20, description pp. 15-25 *passim*.

⁷⁶ James Fergusson, *History of the Modern Styles of Architecture*, 2nd ed. (London, 1873), 4, 401, referring to Gärtner's railroad station for Munich.

enough, the whole wall must, Jupiter-like, nod as well as frown.”⁷⁷ The whole wall of the Continental Bank did, even in those days, when, although by no means the slit of a canyon it has since become, Nassau Street was already a lane, visibly inadequate to the traffic that traversed it and the mere five-story buildings that bordered it, “nod as well as frown” across the lane, from the opposite side of which the crowning and frowning cornice could not be viewed but at a very steep angle. And the effect of massiveness and solidity was attained, virtually, by the employment and exploitation of one dimension, the dimension of thickness. The front, next adjoining on the north, was possibly built for, and, at any rate, was long occupied by the banking house of Duncan, Sherman & Company, and was designed by Alexander Saeltzler, who, for this occasion, dropped in a friendly way into Renaissance, producing a florid front, loaded with projecting bad carving in brownstone, of garlands, cornucopias and so forth.⁷⁸ The building committee of the Continental Bank had solemnly warned their young architect not to attempt to outrival these things by still more pronounced projections of mechanical irrelevancies, and had been comforted by his assurance that he would project nothing beyond the plane of the wall. So, indeed, he did not, barring the string courses between the stories, and, barring the cornice, respecting which he had some trouble with the “Fire Warden,” who was the “Building Department” of the period, who had his doubts about that cornice, and whom the architect was forced to placate by the only method by which he was placable. The architect merely modelled the depth of the walls, modelled it into what is so happily called in technical language the “reveals.” But how happily it was modelled. I wish for the benefit of those who have never seen, or have forgotten, the front as it was, that there were a better and more “revealing” photograph to show them. But it “jumped to the eyes” in the actual structure, what they have painfully to infer from the imperfect photograph, that the thickness of the wall was not only admirably and rationally modelled, with detail multiplied and enriched as it rose, but that the main vertical lines of the front were developed and ramified from bottom to top, until they were merged in the attic and the cornice, which constituted a single feature. And all this in a

⁷⁷ *Seven Lamps*, “Lamp of Power,” sec. 7.

⁷⁸ Duncan, Sherman Co., cor. Nassau and Pine Sts., (1856; demolished) by Alexander Saeltzler.

front which, in mere elevation, was "skeletonized" to the irreducible minimum of masonry. I am afraid that the janitor's family, which occupied the attic-cum-cornice, and looked out on life through mere slits of lancet in each bay, had reason to complain that they were sacrificed to architecture. At any rate, when this upper story, in the late seventies or early eighties, became available for tenantry, the triplets of lancets, like the poor wreathed bullseyes of the poor old Astor House, had to be "reamed out" to more available square windows, and a seventh story was superadded, to the entire artistic destruction of the beautiful front, with incongruous superadditions which, no doubt, the superadder held to be "pure Gothic."

* * *

Almost or quite concurrently with these banks their architect was doing more ambitious and more "institutional" structures. It is a great architectural pity that the old Produce Exchange should have been outgrown.⁷⁹ It consisted of the Exchange room itself with subordinate rooms underneath at first rented out for offices, but afterwards knocked into one to meet the need of additional room for the Exchange, with the result, in the way of intolerably bad ventilation, that was to be expected and that formed one of the most cogent motives for the abandonment of the building. That the building was "Gothic" hardly occurred to the untutored observer, and certainly he was unaware that it was "German Gothic." In fact, the only badges of the style were the entrances, the cappings and corbels of the projections by which the piers were carried past the main cornice, and the detail of the arcades above. For the rest, and inside as well as out, the building seemed to have made itself out of the materials and the conditions. The interior was quite as interesting as the exterior. I wish a photograph of this interior were extant. It was one of his best. The great hall, abundantly lighted from the sides and the transeptual clerestories, was entirely unobstructed except for the four brownstone piers at the inner angles, sustaining the open-timber roof, and modelled with reference to its framing. The clerestory walls were carried upon iron bowstring girders

⁷⁹ † Old Produce Exchange, block bounded by Pearl, Whitehall, Water, and Moore Sts. (1860-1861). This was superseded by a larger Exchange (1881-1884; demolished 1957) by George B. Post (1837-1913) of which Schuyler wrote a harsh criticism (1884-C). On Post's building, see "Another Victorian Vanishes: the New York Produce Exchange," *Architectural Forum*, 106 (June 1957), 142-149; see also above, p. 65n.

introduced and shown with perfect frankness. There was a sparing, simple and expressive decoration in color, and inside and out; the building gave, in a higher degree than any other then extant in New York, except of the same authorship, the sense of life and individuality and reality which are among the most desirable as certainly they are among the rarest of architectural qualities. One essential point of the design the cursory observer is apt to miss—that it could be easily overlooked attested the completeness of its success. The site is not a rectangle but a trapezoid, and the double transeptual arrangement is simply a device to dissemble the irregularity. Thereby hangs a little tale of architecture as it was practised in New York in the late 50's. The plans were obtained by competition. Only a day or two before they were to be handed in one of the competitors called on Mr. Eidlitz and asked to see his design, since it could then "make no difference." When it was shown to him he was so impressed with the effectiveness of the device for dissembling the irregularity of the ground plan that he straightway set his office force to work at a plan in which that device reappeared, but bearing, naturally, such marks of haste and crudity as to put it out of consideration.

The Academy of Music in Brooklyn was its author's most important secular work up to that time.⁸⁰ Confined to a single street front, parallel with the axis of the interior, it was an attempt, then novel on this side of the ocean and not common on the other, to express a theatre in its exterior. There cannot be any question of the success, even from the inadequate photograph, taken from the wrong end of the front, which is all I have been able to procure. (The intrusive fire escape is, of course, a subsequent addition.) The popular success was immediate and decisive and the people of Brooklyn became and remained very proud of the place which for a generation was the centre and focus of their civic life, a function for which the very successful acoustics of the interior especially fitted it. The unusual expanse of the street front is relieved of monotony by the expression of each of its component parts, the green-room, the stage, the auditorium, the foyer, and it is full of character. That it is not an expression of the special character of a theatre was an early criticism. There is, indeed, something severe and almost monastic about the long front, with such sparing decoration as could be afforded under the conditions, at the ends and espe-

⁸⁰ † See above, p. 128n.

cially at the entrance, the further end of the photograph, where the ornament, admirable in its kind and unfailingly placed and "scaled" was wisely concentrated. But blank wall, after all, is that of which the exterior of an auditorium must largely and the exterior of a stage almost exclusively consist, and blank wall, with even a minimum of architectural "treatment," is sure of making its impression. Observe, in a more modern instance, the impressiveness of the buttressed blank wall at the rear of the Metropolitan Opera House in Seventh Avenue, the impressiveness of the unbroken cliff of blank stage wall at the rear of the Hippodrome on Forty-third Street, and note how, for the purpose of breaking it upon the beholder's apathy, these outweigh all the "architecture" elsewhere applied with such excellent intentions and to so little effect. The interior, in which the timber construction was exhibited throughout, in spite of the very pretty and rather festal and rather elaborate design and decoration of the proscenium, with its open gallery above, lighted from the ends, was also found by many observers architecturally too "strenuous" for a theatre, if not for an "Academy of Music." [Fig. 26.] "These Brooklyn people," said a ribald Manhattanese who had been allured over to the City of Churches by some special attraction at the Academy, "wanted a theatre which should be as near as possible to a church—where they could hold a religious revival if they wanted to and a Shakespearean revival if they had to." The gibe had its point. But it would be hard to point to one of the successors of the Brooklyn Academy in either city or in any line, and quite hopeless to designate any successor in its own line which shows greater architectural individuality, or as great a power of robust, vigorous and masculine architectural expression.

* * *

The next work of any importance after the very unconventional and necessarily "unchurchly" Church of the Holy Trinity, was the Dry Dock Savings Bank, which, after a full generation remains so unquestionably the chief architectural ornament of the Bowery [Fig. 27].⁸¹ It differed from its predecessors by the same author in being unmistakably and, as one may say, aggressively Gothic. It took an academic classifier to assign the earlier secular works to a style. Indeed they were not of a style, or, if of any, rather classifiable as Romanesque

⁸¹ † Dry Dock Savings Bank, 343 Bowery (1875; demolished).

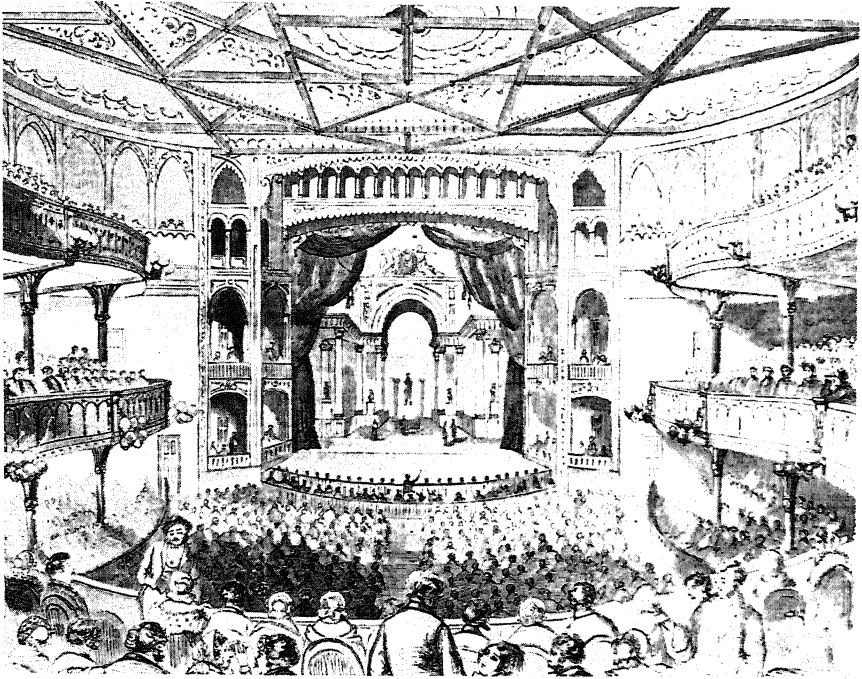


Fig. 26. Leopold Eidlitz. Interior of the Academy of Music,
Brooklyn, N. Y., 1860-1861.

than Gothic. True, the motive of any one of the four fronts of the old Produce Exchange might have been, whether it was or not, suggested by the front of the well known Romanesque church at Minden. True, both that edifice and the Brooklyn Academy of Music bore evidence of their author's admiration of the monuments of the secular German Romanesque, of the Wartburg and of the palace at Gelnhausen. And the banks also could be traced to their originals by a technical expert. One may suppose that these things had their influence upon that architectural expert and "Teutonic" zealot, Professor Freeman, when he declared that it was Broadway which had convinced him that the proper prototype of modern commercial building was to be sought in the Romanesque.⁸² It remained true for the general sensitive but

⁸² Edward Augustus Freeman, *Some Impressions of the United States* (New York, 1883), pp. 246-249. Freeman, the Oxford professor of medieval history, visited the United States



Fig. 27. Leopold Eidlitz. Dry Dock Savings Bank, New York City, 1875.

unlearned beholder that these things were not “examples” of anything but free architecture, and that although they possessed “style,” the style was intrinsic and not historical. But the wayfaring man could not be prevented from perceiving that the Dry Dock Bank was “high Gothic,” and the ready nomenclator found it quite feasible to dismiss it with the ready criticism that it “looked like a church.”

It had had a partial predecessor, five years before, in that sparkling

on a lecture tour between October 1881 and April 1882. In the course of his travels, he decided that “the true style for America was the style of Pisa and Lucca” and, behind these styles, the late Roman complexes at Ragusa and Spalato to which Freeman traced the Romanesque. He was pleased with such evidences of Romanesque as he found on Broadway, and especially admired the New York State Capitol and Eidlitz’s addition to the Tweed Court House. (He mistakenly referred to this last as the City Hall.) The style “seems to have come of itself; and the prospect is all the more hopeful if it has. I should be better pleased to think that the forms which pleased me when my eyes were fresh from Ragusa and Spalato were the work of men who had no thought of Ragusa or Spalato before their eyes.”

little Venetian front of the old Decker Building in Union Square,⁸³ though, in fact it was only the combination of brick and stone and the mild polychromy of the stonework that gave the Venetian look to a front of which the detail owed nothing to North Italy. There is doubtless an infelicity in the superposition of the mansard over the arcade. There is doubtless another in what the author, even while protesting that the front was not worth talking about, explained to have been to himself its most interesting peculiarity, and that was the attempt to make a cornice all of brickwork hold its own above a front in the less conspicuous members of which hewn stone was rather freely employed. Evidently the attempt was not successful. Excepting these infelicities, it may be said the front was very nearly a model shop front for its own restricted dimensions and in its own kind, the kind of course belonging to the pre-elevator era. How one would like to see a row of such in the commercial quarter of a town, say, of 30,000 people, and how such a row would put to shame the actual commercial building, as, in truth, this little front did put to shame the western front of the Union Square of 1870.

Equally Gothic, evidently, and as equally evidently far more elaborate and important than this opusculum is the bank in the Bowery, which is so far from being a mere "front" that it was evidently composed for the perspective view and that either elevation by itself not only does not do the design justice but does not disclose its motive. This motive is the pyramidization of both fronts to the tower at the corner. Some years afterwards Mr. R. M. Hunt employed the same motive, with such ingenuity and success, in the Gerry house, at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Sixtieth⁸⁴ [Fig. 150]. But in the later case, the assumed point of view, being on the park side of the avenue, and much to the northward of the building, is liable to be missed by the wayfarer who is not especially looking for it, whereas nobody walking up or down the Bowery, on either side, can miss the point of the Dry Dock Bank. His particular attention is in fact called to it by the lie of the site, which has an acute angle at the corner whereas the corner of the building is rectangular, and the interval between the building and the building line is filled in part by the two-storied porch, with much addition to the picturesque effect of the pyramidiz-

⁸³ † Decker Building (1870; demolished 1891).

⁸⁴ See below, pp. 538f and note. On "pyramidization," see below, p. 242n.

ing mass. When the bank was new a humorous architectural teleologist was demanded the "function" of a balcony in a savings bank, and made prompt answer, "Oh, that is the place where the president comes out to address the depositors when the bank breaks." All the same, in spite of the picturesque success, there is, one sees on reconsidering the building after so long, a distinct failure of expression. Conversely to the case of St. George's, where the gallery, which is a main feature of the interior, is not expressed exteriorly at all, a light gallery which is but a mere passageway around the banking room is here made the pretext of a division into two unmistakably divided stories. It remains true that the large and lofty banking room which, with its lower appendages, in effect constitutes the building, does not sufficiently appear. But the pyramidal mass is so impressive, the relation of voids to solids so effective, the detail so well studied and so well adjusted that the exterior of the bank remains one of the best things in our street architecture. The interior has a still higher interest as the only example on a large scale of groined vaulting in New York, and as the prototype of the Assembly Chamber in Albany⁸⁵ which was on so much larger a scale and so far more lavishly carried out. Here a Spartan building committee prevented the architect, to his chagrin, from filling in the panels of the vaulting even with buff brick, and they remain in inexpressive plaster, though the vaulted ceiling nevertheless makes its effect of reality through sheer force of design.

* * *

The late 60's and early 70's beheld our architect diverted into a phase of "artistic engineering," in which the substantive was much more conspicuous than the adjective. The avocation lasted from just after the completion of the Jewish synagogue to the collapse of the Tammany Ring.⁸⁶ How he came to encounter Peter B. Sweeny I do

⁸⁵ See immediately below.

⁸⁶ Reference to the so-called Viaduct Railway sponsored by the Tweed Ring and initiated by Peter B. Sweeny (1825-1911), who is generally considered to have been the "brains" behind the municipal plundering. Eidlitz and Gen. Edward Wellman Serrell (1826-1906), an eminent railroad and bridge engineer who was among the most brilliant engineers of the Union Army, were Sweeny's professional consultants. Their scheme came to little more than a report (John W. Serrell and Leopold Eidlitz, *A Viaduct Railway for the City of New York* [New York, 1870], 16 pp.) and the sketch mentioned by Schuyler for the Brooklyn Bridge station, which we have not located.

One of a number of proposals for rapid transit agitating New York from the sixties onward in the attempt to develop Manhattan above 59th St., this one is dismissed by William

not know. But, after this lapse of time, one risks nothing in saying that the "brains" of the Tweed Ring had an ambition much higher than that of most of his associates. He regarded power, however gotten, as a means to other ends than that of gathering dollars without any olfactory investigation of their origin. He had an ambition to leave monuments of public utility behind him and to "plant things that were like to last." And, in this ambition, when he met Leopold Eidlitz, he met a man after his own heart. Then, as ever since, perhaps more acutely than ever since, "rapid transit" was the indispensable condition of the expansion of New York, and Mr. Sweeny had the honorable desire to associate his name and memory with the satisfaction of that crying need. There was associated with Mr. Eidlitz another engineer, General Serrell, of more experience in railroad building. I have always supposed that the monumental scheme of buying a right of way through blocks, asking the public only to grant the right of crossing the streets, and thus of constructing the road at the most convenient and economical grades, instead of following the casual undulations of the terrain, was Mr. Eidlitz's own. At any rate, he entered heart and soul into the work, and was ready to point out to the frequent objector to his scheme upon the ground of its inordinate cost that the longer the city waited the costlier it would be, while some such scheme was the only real and permanent solution of the question of rapid transit. It was, in fact, according to him, a sort of Sybilline proposition that the city, as an aggregation of landholders, was making to the city, as a municipality, a proposition becoming more "prohibitive" as the acceptance of it was delayed. To quite another class of objectors, represented, so far as I know, by the present writer exclusively, who reproached him for abandoning architecture for this lucrative and utilitarian employment, he triumphantly rejoined by enumerating the architectural opportunities in the way of bridges and stations

F. Reeves, *The First Elevated Railroads in Manhattan and the Bronx of the City of New York* (New York, 1936), pp. 9f, as a typical example of the Ring's chicanery in attempting to block more legitimate proposals in order to increase its own financial advantage. The scheme was, however, interesting in two respects. First, Serrell and Eidlitz would have erected the railway through the middle of blocks rather than over the street. Second, they would have rented as warehouse and storage space the area under the viaduct to landlords whose property immediately fronted it, thus hopefully underwriting a substantial part of the cost of land acquisition and construction. Tracks were to have run from City Hall through blocks between Broadway and Bowery with a fork at Bleecker St. splitting the railway into east and west side branches, both of which would have terminated at the Harlem River.

which the Viaduct would afford. The only one of these opportunities that took shape, even in drawings, before the fall of the Ring submerged the whole project in its ruins, was a sketch for a huge steep-roofed station at the eastern end of the Brooklyn-East River Bridge, then already projected, and the southern terminal of the Viaduct or of one of its branches, which sketch got the length of publication in the illustrated papers.

3. *The Capitol at Albany*

[After a synopsis of the vexed history of the building of the New York State Capitol,⁸⁷ Schuyler discusses Eidlitz's Assembly Chamber.]

It were not a very hazardous contention that "the noblest offspring" of the Gothic revival in this country, at least in secular work, was "its last." If so, the credit is chiefly due to Leopold Eidlitz. The building is not an architectural whole, and never after it was begun and committed, could have been. It was aborted beforehand, and it has been grievously marred since. But it includes about the most interesting examples in the United States of free and rational architecture, of the architecture of fact and reality, of the architecture of the future if

⁸⁷ Construction of the Capitol, from designs by Thomas Fuller (1822-1898) and Augustus Laver (1834-1898), who had also designed the Houses of Parliament in Ottawa, had dragged on from 1867 amid immense graft, when in 1875 Governor Samuel J. Tilden called in Eidlitz, Richardson, and the landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903). Elected on a reform ticket, Governor Tilden was solely concerned with the cost of the building; but Lieutenant-Governor William Dorsheimer, a classmate of Richardson at Harvard and his patron in Buffalo, was equally chagrined by its esthetic qualities. Dorsheimer was apparently responsible for the high caliber of the Advisory Board, although Manton Marble of the *World* recommended Eidlitz (at Schuyler's urging?). Having made its report, the Advisory Board was given the task of completing the building and rectifying its design. At this point the Capitol had roughly reached the level of the third floor with much work to be done in the interior. Although the three designers formed a partnership for this commission, they quite independently designed different parts of the building. Eidlitz is primarily responsible for the † Assembly Chamber and Assembly Stair (completed 1878), the so-called † Golden Corridor (1878), the † Court of Appeals Room (1878), the † Senate Corridor (1880), and the † Senate Staircase (1885), plus the † fronts of the Courts on the exterior (1878). Extensive alterations have destroyed all of Eidlitz's interior work except for the Assembly Chamber and Stair, the Senate (or State St.) Stair, and the Court of Appeals (now Court of Claims). The last had been altered when reduced in size by offices 234, 235, and 236. The creation of these and other offices (231-239) eliminated the Golden Corridor which once ran inside the north wall of the interior light court of the building and gave entrance to the Court of Appeals. According to *The New Albany* (Sept. 1892): "The Golden Corridor, reached on the second floor by the assembly staircase, was intended by its Oriental splendor to relieve the massive effect of so much granite, but the soft sand stone did not sustain the weight above it, and after much repairing it took its place among the mistakes." The Assembly Stair also required much repair; but the most serious faulting occurred in the vaults of the Assembly Chamber. Shortly after their erection, stones in the vaulting cracked

architecture with us is to have a future. If so, that is because Eidlitz laid a fearless hand on the ark of the traditional architectural covenant, appalling even his own colleagues by the boldness with which he followed his convictions. It is to this boldness that we owe Richardson's Senate Chamber and Court of Appeals, as well as Eidlitz's own work, herewith illustrated.

With the demolition of the vaulted ceiling after it had stood for ten years, and the erection of its morally and architecturally discredited successor, the general conception of the Assembly Chamber, perhaps the noblest monument of the Gothic revival in America, became almost unintelligible, without the aid of the illustrations herewith presented of what it was to show how noble a conception it was and how artistically carried out in detail [Fig. 28]. "What a great thing to have been done in this country," I remember John Hay⁸⁸ saying, as he stood under the keystone of the central domed vault in the first year of its existence. Even before that demolition the so-called Golden Corridor had been ruthlessly demolished to make more committee-rooms and that corridor was the most successful illustration in the building, or elsewhere of that union of Gothic architecture and Saracenic decoration in which the

and small pieces fell. Again from *The New Albany*: "A commission of experts reported that it was best to take the ceiling down. The architects protested, and offered to repair it at their own expense; they were allowed to do so, replaced the defective stones, and for a year or two all anxiety subsided; stones continued to fall, however, and finally, to the regret of all admirers of the superb in architecture, the stone ceiling was removed in 1888, and the present one of wood substituted. . . . [William Morris Hunt's † allegorical lunettes on the walls immediately under the vaults] are now hidden from sight by the wooden ceiling; but before that was substituted they had become seriously damaged and defaced by the failure of the pigments to adhere to stone." In plan the Capitol is a courted block and, therefore, when Schuyler mentions the North Center, where most of Eidlitz's work was done above the level of the first floor, he refers to this plan. For Richardson's share in this vexed structure, see Hitchcock, *Richardson*, pp. 168-171.

Schuyler's remarks on the Assembly Chamber in his original article on the Capitol (1879-A) are especially interesting: "Except in one conspicuous instance, the structure is completely developed, and complete development is the mark of perfected Gothic. This completeness, however, nowhere degenerates in the attenuation that comes of excessive subdivision—nowhere into a loss of that sense of power which belongs to unhewn masses fulfilling structural necessities. There is nothing here of which one may say: 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.' Neither is there anything of that ascetic intensity which most of all has set its stamp upon the ecclesiastical work of the Middle Ages. This work is as daylit as Grecian Doric. It is frank and manly, and it is eminently alive—distinctly a product of our time." (See 1879-A, p. 173.) The "conspicuous instance" of esthetic failure, to Schuyler, was the too "rudimentary" character of the cylindrical columns. These "great shining shafts attract attention partly for their own sakes, and not entirely, as every other member of the architecture does, for their contribution to the whole." (See 1879-A, p. 176.)

⁸⁸ John Hay (1838-1905), eventually famous as Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of State.

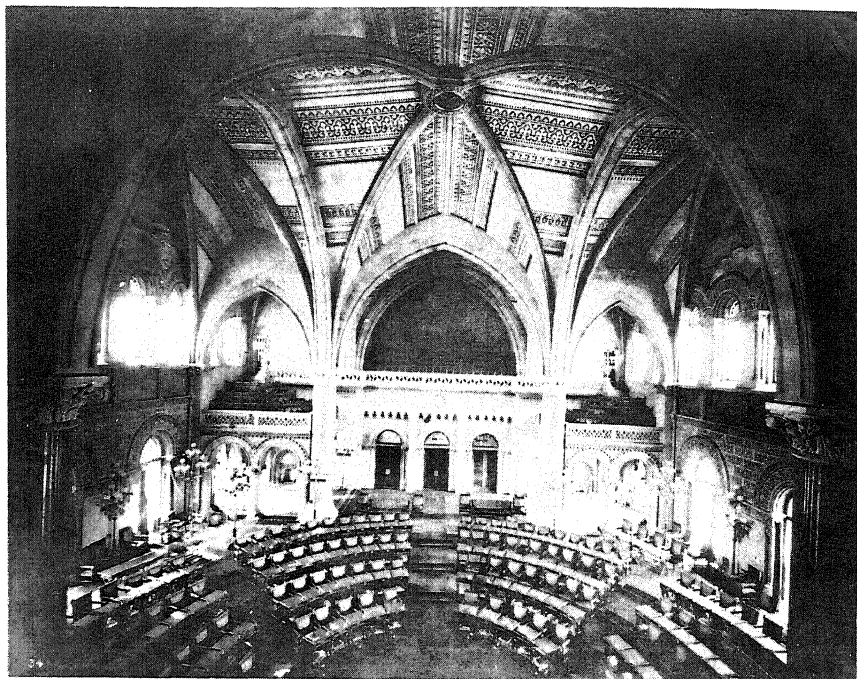


Fig. 28. Leopold Eidlitz. Assembly Chamber, New York State Capitol, Albany, N. Y., completed 1878.

architect and decorator so fervently believed. Nobody who remembers it will deny or belittle its success. A corridor of the impressive length of 140 feet, divided into seven square bays of 20, it was purposely kept to the utmost simplicity in form that it might most effectively exhibit the utmost resplendence in color, with its walls a trellis of gold and yellow on a ground of red, its ceiling a diaper of blue, red and umber on a ground of gold. The "Assembly Parlor" was also a success in polychromatic decoration, until it occurred to somebody to vandalize it by substituting a "tint" of terra cotta for the carmine of the walls below the prismatic frieze of white, blue and gold. Richardson suffered also, though posthumously, inasmuch that his fine conception of the western staircase is burlesqued by the absurd capitals subsequently introduced, and his fine conception of the Library⁸⁹ by the tawdry and commonplace painted decoration.

⁸⁹ The fire of 1911 completely destroyed what was left of Richardson's Library.

But there was no question of the success of the North Centre with the architectural profession or the public when it was at last thrown open for the meeting of the legislature of 1879. No architect in this country has had a more triumphant hour than its designer, as he stood, at the reception the evening before the meeting, under one of the vaults of the Assembly Chamber, at the receipt of congratulations. He subsequently and characteristically took refuge from congratulation in sardronics: "Yes, I think it was a success. I met Blank there (a feebly aesthetic architect, particularly antipathetic to him) after a pleasant separation of fifteen years, and he looked very miserable."

During the last few months, as you may conceive, the preparations for that famous opening had absorbed the attention of everybody concerned. The Chairman of the Commission and the Advisory Board frequently took the night boat up the Hudson to go over the work in the morning, Eidlitz laden with a huge roll of working drawings which he would not trust out of his sight. It was more than once my privilege to be one of the excursionists. Mr. J. Q. A. Ward ⁹⁰ had been invited to do friezes between the two ranges of windows in the Assembly Chamber to complement Hunt's allegorical frescoes in the lunettes above the upper range.⁹¹ The frieze, for some now forgotten reason, never materialized. But Mr. Ward, writing to confirm my recollection that he went up to consider it with reference to its site, says: "There was never so much wit and humor and science and art on that boat before or since." Verily, those were good nights aboard that North River steamer. There was Richardson, with his headlong precipitate enthusiastic discourse, suddenly brought up, at a crisis of the rhapsody, with a proposition from Eidlitz, which, to impose itself as axiomatic needed but to be stated. There was Olmsted, interjecting at critical points a mild Socratic inquiry always of high pertinence, the point or edge of which went unfelt and unperceived, for the most part, by the heated disputants. There was Dorsheimer, hovering on the circumference of the discussion like a genial chorus, though of Teutonic rather than Hellenic suggestion, and occasionally breaking in with some explicit praise of the "lucid German intellect" as exemplified by

⁹⁰ John Quincy Adams Ward (1830-1910), American sculptor. Schuyler published a popular article on him: "John Quincy Adams Ward. The Work of a Veteran Sculptor," *Putnam's Magazine*, 6 (Sept. 1909), 643-656.

⁹¹ William Morris Hunt (1824-1879), the painter brother of the architect. The lunettes in the State Capitol were his last major work before his suicide.

Eidlitz. "Noctes coenaque deum,"⁹² as nights if not suppers go in this imperfect sphere. And, when Albany was reached, there in that autumn of 1878, was William Morris Hunt, in an improvised studio in the unfurnished Capitol, working away at his unfinished allegories, and solacing his leisure with extremely pointed discourse. For he was a famous talker, and volumes were made by admiring disciples and discipulae in Boston of his "Talks on Art."⁹³ Eidlitz and he took to each other at once, the architect describing the painter as "not only an artist, but a philosopher," which was his maximum of praise, the painter ascribing to the architect, "a great brain and a great heart." I happened to be one of the little party which assembled on the temporary bridge thrown from one lunette to another, of the Assembly Chamber, when the black and white cartoons of the "The Discoverer" and "The Flight of Night" were, by a magic lantern arrangement of glass slides and oxyhydrogen light, shown in the places they were meant to adorn. Being painted directly on the stonework, they shared the fate of the vaulting when it was ordered to demolition. [At this point, Schuyler describes the murals, sketches for both being reproduced in the original article, pp. 372, 373. He comments that the Capitol interiors, fifteen years before the Columbian Exposition and twenty before the Library of Congress, represented a pioneer American venture in the integration of the arts with artists of the highest professional standing. Schuyler then turns to Eidlitz's work at the Capitol.]

Consider that Mr. Eidlitz's work in that North Centre included not only the Assembly Chamber, the focus and cynosure of the whole display, but also the Assembly staircase, the room intended for the Court of Appeals, but temporarily fitted for the occupancy of the Senate until its own chamber, designed by Richardson, should be ready, and the so-called golden corridor. Consider how elaborated and how unmistakably individual the design of all these things, and that the designer was also decorator, excepting of the two mural pictures. Consider that the architect was concurrently designing the exterior and interior of the addition to the Court House in City Hall Park,⁹⁴ and architects will admit that that was a wonderful year's work for

⁹² "O nights and banquets of the gods!" Horace, *Satires*.

⁹³ Helen M. Knowlton, ed. *W. M. Hunt's Talks on Art* (Boston, 1875).

⁹⁴ See above, p. 163n, which also explains the allusion to the repainted rotunda mentioned below.



Fig. 29. Leopold Eidlitz. Senate Corridor, New York State Capitol, Albany, N. Y., completed 1880.

one man to do. And of how high a quality the work is, and how little it stands in need of allowance for the pressure under which it was done! How can anybody even now view what is left of it without perceiving how strenuous, how serious, how skilful and how noble it is, and without experiencing an impulse to take off his hat? The Senate corridor was done two years later [Fig. 29], the Senate staircase not finished until six years later. They were designed more at leisure. Though the designs of the earlier work bears few marks of haste, the later justify their deliberation. The corridor, doubled with a row of columns in the middle, by reason of the want of abutment for a single arch, is known to all visitors to the Capitol as one of its most impressive features.

And the great Senate staircase, with its doubled half-arches and its triplet of arches at the landing, is not only one of the most original and vigorous works of the Gothic revival, it is in its scheme and intention, at least, if not in the charm of handicraft and execution, one of the few modern Gothic works which one would be willing to set beside the ancient examples to show that the "revived" Gothic might not only be galvanized into a semblance of vitality, but might really "come alive."

* * *

What Mr. Eidlitz was concurrently or almost concurrently doing in his addition to the Tweed Court House in New York was what he ought to have done in his superstructure of the Capitol at Albany, namely to improve its composition and refine and rationalize its detail so far as those objects should be attained without a violent departure in "style" or a flat contradiction in simultaneously visible terms. But the outraged professional sensibilities were not in fact managed, in the Court House any more than in the Capitol, though the opposition did not in the New York case, take the shape of formal remonstrance. It was, however, the open contempt for its surroundings which the interior rotunda showed that mainly excited academic opposition. His work in that rotunda has been shorn of much of its pristine force, which was much promoted by the tri-colored brickwork, while at the same time its contradiction of its surroundings has been considerably softened, by being subjected, stonework, brickwork and all, to an equable coat of gray paint which quite nullifies the accentuation of the design by color. It seems impossible to keep the painter away from public works. Mr. Withers came to me once in much distress to know if I had no "influence" which would thwart the project of which he had heard of painting the brickwork of the Jefferson Market Court House, then just beginning to take "a plausible aspect of moderate antiquity" and to weather into mellowness.⁹⁵ I managed to meet the official custodian of the building, who informed me that it was quite true that he was going to have the front painted, but that he was going to do it simply out of the interest and pride which he felt in the building, which he regarded as "shabby." When I asked him whether he thought

⁹⁵ Jefferson Market Court House, triangle bounded by W. 10th St., 6th and Greenwich Aves., (designed 1876; extant) by Frederick C. Withers (1828-1901) and Calvert Vaux (1824-1892). Ills. in *New York Sketch-Book of Architecture*, 2 (June 1875), plate 21.

he felt more interest in the appearance of the building than its architect, his answer was, "Aw, that dingy look may do for London, but it won't do for New York," and "freshened up" the poor front accordingly was.

* * *

These works, the Albany Capitol and the New York Court House, were received and resented by the conventionally minded of the profession and the public as if they had been intended as affronts to the conventional architecture which they certainly flouted. To the best of my belief, this was not the case at all. Their author's notion of the duty of an architect, to paraphrase Cicero's of that of an historian, was simply "ne quid falsi 'facere' audeat, ne quid veri non audeat."⁹⁶ The "boldness" and "defiance" with which he was charged in adjoining what he regarded as an architecture of reason to an architecture of convention, were to him merely a following of truth and reason, and he was honestly pained and puzzled by the commotion which his efforts in that direction inspired. He had, in truth, a naiveté of intellectual integrity. He no more meant to be defiant in these things than to be offensive to an architect with whom his relations were quite friendly, and who had given a "reception" to inaugurate his latest work, when he said to him: "Asterisk, why do you invite people to go and look at that ridiculous building?" Standing in the rotunda of the Court House one day, when his own vari-colored brick arches and columns had been inserted between the cast-iron panels of the older work, he said, "Is it possible for anybody to fail to see that this," pointing to the new work, "performs a function, and that that," pointing to the old, "does not?" A "Q. E. D." was the aim of his every architectural endeavor, what might be called a scientific solution of an artistic problem.

* * *

After the Capitol and the Court House, the architect's remaining works, done in the early nineties, were very minor, and they were of so bald an austerity that they might be challenged as not "architecture" at all. One was some work for the city in lunatic asylums at Ward's Island and at Central Islip, L. I., the other the reconstruction and

⁹⁶ "Let him make nothing false, nor suppress any truth." An axiomatic version from Cicero, *De Oratore*, II. Schuyler has substituted *facere* (to make) for Cicero's *scribere* (to write).

incidental extension of the Cooper Union,⁹⁷ which had developed structural weakness. At first sight it seems that in both works, experience had brought the aged architect to what Emerson, speaking of the old Goethe, calls "an extreme impatience of conjecture and rhetoric."⁹⁸ But in fact, in each case, the work had to be done at the absolute minimum of cost and was thus reduced to the absolutely indispensable. The lunatic asylums on Long Island were prescribed to be built on the "pavilion system," whether in mere analogy to ordinary hospitals or out of some belief that lunacy was infectious and that its abodes might require to be destroyed to rid them of the "bacillus lunaticus" I do not know. At any rate, when the architect said to me of the work at Islip, "That will interest you. It is nothing but the construction," of course I hastened to visit it. Very interesting indeed I found it, being simply the irreducible minimum of "accommodation" in common brick and yellow pine. A panel of terra cotta on the administrative building is the only ornament I recall. But the work is immensely impressive by very dint of its austerity. One of the dining halls is merely a four hipped steep roof standing on the ground, or with a wall no more than man-high [Fig. 30].

Nearly half a century before the architect had devised and built a structure essentially similar as an impromptu dining room on the Bloomingdale Road in which Fernando Wood, then Mayor of New York, might give an official luncheon to the Prince of Wales, then incognito as "Baron Renfrew," now the aging Edward VII.⁹⁹ But the earlier, a nine days' wonder to the New York of 1860, was elaborated with much moulding and copiously decorated with much jig sawyery and pigment. The later was the absolute "bones," even the

⁹⁷ We have been unable to locate Eidlitz's work for Ward Island. For the Central Islip State Hospital, he built several severely plain brick wards and Dining Room F in the early nineties; all exist. The interesting, but impractical, Dining Room F has been converted into a storage room for civilian defense supplies from about 1955. On Eidlitz's work at Cooper Union, see immediately below.

⁹⁸ Emerson, *Representative Men*, "Goethe, or the Writer."

⁹⁹ Visiting Canada in 1860, Victoria's son, the Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII) was invited to New York by a group of prominent citizens under the leadership of Peter Cooper. As Manhattan's first royal visitor, the Baron Renfrew (the title he used for the trip) received an exuberant reception during a parade down Broadway on Oct. 12, 1860. Highlight of his visit was a ball held that evening at the Academy of Music. Eidlitz's pavilion, in the manner of the later dining room at Central Islip Hospital, sheltered a breakfast held at Mayor Fernando Wood's "Fairlawn" on the following morning. See Lloyd Morris, *Incredible New York* (New York, 1951), pp. 22f, and R. J. de Cordova, *The Prince's Visit* (New York, 1861), a spoofing doggerel on the occasion.



Fig. 30. Leopold Eidlitz. Dining Room F, State Hospital,
Central Islip, Long Island, N. Y., c. 1890.

pine timbers, left simply oiled, not such in size and shape and spacing as an architect would have chosen, but merely the "stock sizes" the market afforded at the cheapest rate. A mere piece of carpentry, you would say. Is it an example of architecture at all, with this rigid restriction of it to the full necessities of the case? Certainly not a piece of architecture in the Ruskinian sense in which architecture is "the addition of unnecessary features." But yet the mere layout is such that the spectator cannot help seeing that it was not devised by the common carpenter, nor saying to himself "an architect has been here." And the question recurs with equal urgency about the additions to the Cooper Union.¹⁰⁰ The second story of segmental arches, substituted for a pilastered colonnade which had broken down, is clearly "architec-

¹⁰⁰ Eidlitz was in charge of a virtual reconstruction with additions of Cooper Union in 1885-1887. The Ruskinian allusion is to *Seven Lamps*, "Lamp of Sacrifice," section 1.

ture," and a dignified range of openings. But those strange, uncouth erections on the roof are questionable, are puzzling until you come to perceive, or to be told, that it was merely a question of making three rows of drafting rooms with the utmost advantage that could be taken of the North light. And the basement, that Hall which is the civic forum of Manhattan, those absolutely plain cast-iron columns and those absolutely plain granite arches? You perceive that they are the mere underpinning of a precarious superstructure. You cannot help finding them impressive. Even while you question whether they are architecture, you perceive that they are as much beyond the reach of the common stonemason as that dining hall at Islip of the common carpenter. Well, then, you might conclude, the work of an engineer; an artistic engineer. There the designer would have been with you. "Artistic engineering," he would have said, "why, that is architecture."

There was a reminiscence of that reconstruction of the Cooper Union in which the architect delighted as showing that for once he had met an owner who abounded beyond the architect in the architect's own sense. The owner, and payer, was his old friend, Edward Cooper, who had been educated as an engineer.¹⁰¹ There were in the construction two sets of loads for which the architect had devised but one set of iron columns. The owner, going over the drawings, detected and pointed out that the supports were not proportional to the loads. The architect responded that that was quite true, but that the single form of column was quite equal to the heavier load, that the incongruity was not manifest, and that the metal that might be saved by using two castings was not equal in value to the cost of the additional casting. But the precise mind of the owner would not put up with the incongruity. He insisted that the supports should be made proportional to the loads, and proportional they were accordingly made, at his expense. Now, was that insistence of Mr. Cooper's "scientific" or was it "artistic?" Here is another question for the Gnostaisthetikal Debating Society.¹⁰²

* * *

¹⁰¹ Edward Cooper (1824-1905), engineer son of Peter Cooper, who had founded Cooper Union. Edward Cooper, long a trustee of the school, was a manufacturer and an inventor of considerable brilliance.

¹⁰² This Debating Society may be Schuyler's fabrication. In any event, he explains his meaning in "Bridges and the Art Commission" (1907-G, p. 470), where he calls for the union of "Gnostikos" and "Aisthetikos."

Mr. Eidlitz had eminently the mathematical mind. Of the proposition that the angles of a triangle equal two right angles, he said, "I don't need the demonstration. I see it." Which recalls Mr. Pollock's anecdote of Professor Clifford when the less mathematically gifted undergraduate used to take his mathematical troubles to the more gifted. "I was always struck," says the biographer, "with the fact that he did not seem to be following a course of reasoning so much as describing what he saw."¹⁰³ This was very notable in Mr. Eidlitz. Every architectural problem he tried to resolve into a question of mechanics. I have known one or two other men who had this same way of regarding architecture, but never one who approached him in power of exposition. Talking always with a pencil in hand, what he saw he often wonderfully made you succeed in seeing too. Although he always maintained that a practising architect could not be a professor of architecture, he would have made an admirable professor of it himself, of his kind of architecture, that is, the architecture of reality and reason, not of the architecture of tradition and convention. And his wit, which was a delight to his friends, was often but a condensed and vivid statement of the facts of the case. As when, after an elaborate dissection of a scheme, presented in an elaborate perspective, for an exposition building, he wound up: "So that you see this whole project ultimately rests upon Blank's ignorance of the mechanical properties of an arch." And again, at the end of a similar analysis: "That is the mechanical objection. The aesthetic objection is founded upon the mechanical, and is simple—if a thing is weak it will look weak." An architect of this kind, invoked to do over the work of an architect of the other kind, regarded a suggestion of compromise and mediation as he would have regarded an attempt to compromise the proposition that twice two are four with the proposition that they are six by a working agreement that they make five.

Doubtless there is danger in this attempt to attain scientific certainty in artistic matters, as Clarendon speaks of the engine "too mathematically conceived," of Chillingworth.¹⁰⁴ Doubtless, the reader will say, and the writer will have to agree, he stretched this insistence further

¹⁰³ Sir Frederick Pollock, "Biographical Introduction" to William Kingdon Clifford, *Lectures and Essays*, 1st ed. (London, 1879), p. 4.

¹⁰⁴ Edward Hyde, first Earl of Clarendon (1609-1674), *The Life of Edward, Earl of Clarendon, by Himself* (written in 1668-1670). The reference is to a war machine, devised by William Chillingworth (1602-1644) and fruitlessly employed during the Cromwellian Rebellion.

than it would fairly go. As naturally, being first of all an artist, he did things which he could not logically defend, as for example, those pinnacles at the angles of the tower of the Dry Dock Bank, introduced again in the St. George's clergy house, which are so evidently structurally meaningless, but these things he never attempted to defend further than by saying, "It would have been hard to treat otherwise." And really it was astonishing how many matters which commonly pass as matters of feeling he managed to bring within the reign of law and the province of reason.

If he could have written as well as he talked, he would be recognized as a leading architectural authority. But one art is enough for one man to master. Readers of the *Architectural Record* are aware, from the articles that have appeared in it from his pen on "The Vicissitudes of Architecture" and "Fashion in Architecture,"¹⁰⁵ that he could express himself with point even on paper. But it takes an earnest reader to attack his "Nature and Function of Art," published in 1881.¹⁰⁶ One of its reviewers remarked that the author "should have had a literary man," a comment the justice of which I am freer to acknowledge because I was myself such "literary man" as there was in the case. But, presented with however little of factitious attractiveness, the ideas made their way by their own force to the readers they were meant for. They attracted the notice of Professor Aitchison, and it was, doubtless, due to his conviction of the importance of the book that it obtained for the author an honorary membership in the Royal Institute of British Architects.¹⁰⁷ Another little book of his, of much less pretension, had rather more vogue. This was "Big Wages and How to Earn Them," a criticism upon the methods and aims of the trades unions, from the points of view of political economy, industrial efficiency and individual opportunity, which was published anonymously by the Harpers about twenty years ago.¹⁰⁸

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¹⁰⁵ "The Vicissitudes of Architecture," *Architectural Record*, 1 (Apr.-June 1892), 471-484; "The Architect of Fashion," 3 (Apr.-June 1894), 347-353; "Competitions—The Vicissitudes of Architecture," 4 (Oct.-Dec. 1902), 147-156. The "vicissitudes" series was apparently to have been continued, but stopped with the 1902 article. The themes of these articles are those which he discussed in *Nature and Function in Art* and are, in some respects, clearer statements of his position on certain matters than those made in the larger treatment: the fallacy of the architect as a mere placator of clients and delineator of pretty pictures; the need to start with an expressive idea for the building; the necessity to begin with the cell conceived in terms of function and structure and combining to create the ultimate building.

¹⁰⁶ See above, pp. 23-32.

¹⁰⁷ See above, p. 24n.

¹⁰⁸ Anonymously published by "A Foreman," *Big Wages and How to Earn Them* (New

It was Eidlitz's saying: "American architecture is the art of covering one thing with another thing to imitate a third thing which, if genuine, would not be desirable." It was that of his contemporary and frequent competitor, James Renwick,¹⁰⁹ that "the business of an American architect is to build something that will stand and be fairly presentable for about thirty years." Obviously working in the spirit of the second saying tends to make the first come true. But Eidlitz planned and built for a secular duration. It is a melancholy reflection that nevertheless he survived more than half of his own work, more than half in bulk and in value, and that of some of the best of it it has been impossible to find any memorial for the purpose of this study. There is, one hopes, enough of it remaining to be stimulating and exemplary to students of a younger generation, of whom it was his own hope that some would "see what he meant." But for a knowledge of him one has largely to fall back upon the personal recollections of his friends. "The most striking individuality I ever met," said Fred Law Olmsted, who had an eye for character among other things. And after one of the discussions, in the collaboration of the Capitol, in which Eidlitz had eminently displayed his power of insight and of exposition, Richardson exclaimed, in his impetuous way, "I never met a man who had architecture so completely at his fingers' ends." And again, in a still higher flight of enthusiasm, "Architect or not architect, the ablest man I ever knew." The senior partner on his side said, "Richardson has far more copiousness of invention than I." To those who really knew the architect now departed, it will seem well within bounds to say that his was the clearest and most vigorous mind that in his day and in this country was applied to the practice of architecture.

York, 1887). Eidlitz's central theme is that "the reward of labor is its production" rather than its wages, since only maximum productivity can effect wages in terms of real purchasing power. He therefore favored any measure which would increase productivity and reduce prices: no union controls, free trade, and restrictions with respect to certain monopolistic practices.

¹⁰⁹ See below, p. 228n.

III. The Richardsonian Interlude

The Romanesque Revival in New York¹

It is an unusual comfort in architectural history or in architectural criticism to find a word denoting a style, about the meaning and the applicability of which there can be no question; and such a word is Romanesque. Almost every writer on Gothic architecture has to begin by defining his terms, even if he does not begin by quarrelling with the accepted terms. The latest of these writers, and one of the ablest and most instructive of them, Mr. Charles Herbert Moore,² finds himself compelled, while accepting the word Gothic, in spite of the objections of the English critics who for a generation or two have been vainly trying to substitute "Pointed," to use the word in a somewhat esoteric sense, and so as to exclude a majority of the buildings that have been commonly and loosely classified with those to which he proposes to restrict the term. But with regard to Romanesque there is no difficulty and no ambiguity. Historically, it is that manner of building which came to prevail over Western Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire, which was directly or indirectly inspired by Roman examples, and which is yet not Roman but Romanesque. The building of Europe

¹ *Architectural Record*, 1 (Oct.-Dec. 1891), 151-198. Excerpted.

² Charles Herbert Moore, *Development and Character of Gothic Architecture* (New York and London, 1890). Schuyler refers here to Moore's extremely narrow definition of "Gothic" as referring solely to a rationalistic structural system—his conviction representing the ultimate position of a popular nineteenth-century approach to Gothic architecture. Thus, in his preface, Moore attacks English writers especially, who would make "pointedness" the dominant quality in a style which was, to him, "carried out systematically, with strict logic of construction, with thorough regard to mechanical and statical principles, and with a controlling sense of beauty" nowhere but in France. Obviously such a radical rationalism eliminated much that was customarily considered "Gothic," while coming close to equating the medieval psyche to that of the nineteenth-century engineer. Scholars today would almost universally hold that Moore rode his thesis too hard. Incidentally, scholars today would also find Schuyler's suggestion of general agreement with respect to the meaning of "Romanesque" as compared to "Gothic" extraordinarily sanguine.

came to be Romanized as its law came to be Romanized and as its languages came to be Latinized, and fallen Rome had the same revenge upon its conquerors that vanquished Greece had had upon victorious Rome. The local modifications were wide and many, but the influence of Roman architecture is everywhere traceable. There is one Romanesque of Lombardy and another Romanesque of Normandy and another Romanesque of the Rhine and another Romanesque of Provence, the special seat of "Romance," but the building of Western Europe from the fourth century to the thirteenth, Teutonized or Gallicized as it may be, testifies unmistakably to its origin. Another concurrent and yet divergent movement there was from the same source, and it was that which determined the architecture of Eastern Europe and of Asia. The great gift that Roman engineering made to the world was the introduction and the technical development of the arch, including its derivatives, the vault, which is merely a prolonged arch, the intersecting vault, and the dome. These features were technically but not artistically developed; that is to say, the Roman treatment of them was engineering and not architecture. It was reserved for later generations to convert them into works of art, and the first step towards doing this was to omit the irrelevant ornament under which the Romans had concealed what they were really doing, and to develop the architecture of the structure out of the structure itself. The Romanesque builders of the West undertook this with the arch and the vault, and created Romanesque architecture. The Greek revivalists, as Viollet-le-Duc calls them,³ of the Lower Empire undertook it with the dome and created Byzantine architecture. From the former came the Romanesque monuments, which a later inspiration was required so to re-create into Gothic that but for the monuments that bear witness to the intermediate stages of the process we should never suspect that Amiens and Cologne were derived from the Roman basilica. From the latter, the true Greek Renaissance, came not merely by degeneracy of the barbarism of Russo-Greek architecture, but by development of the whole of Saracenic domical architecture, so that it is to the decline of the Roman Empire that we ultimately owe the architecture of the mosques as well as of the cathedrals, and but for the builders of Byzantium there would have been no Alhambra and no Taj Mahal.

We are fortunate enough to be able to establish with precision the

³ Viollet-le-Duc, *Discourses*, I, lecture 6; see also *ibid.*, ed. Van Brunt, pp. 440f.

very building in which each of these two great architectural currents had its source. The Palace of Diocletian at Spalato, built at the end of the third century, was the origin of Romanesque, as the great church of Saint Sophia, built three centuries later, was to be the origin of Byzantine building. To the dilettanti of the eighteenth century the former edifice embodied the last debasement of Roman architecture. "We are informed," says the historian of the "Decline and Fall," "by a recent and very judicious traveler, that the awful ruins of Spalato are not less expressive of the decline of the arts than of the greatness of the Roman empire in the time of Diocletian."⁴ It was reserved for a later and more discerning criticism to perceive that the change which, to the architects and the amateurs of a hundred years ago, was a mere corruption, was in fact the mark of life and progress, was a change which, as Mr. Street says, "at once revolutionized all existing architectural laws;"⁵ which, as Mr. Freeman says, "was the greatest advance that a single mind ever made in the progress of the building art." Mr. Freeman again is entitled to the credit of being the first historian of architecture to appreciate it in full, as he is the only one who has had the insight and the courage to describe the classical Roman architecture as being, what in truth it is, a transitional style, "a transition from Grecian to Romanesque, from the consistent system of the entablature to the consistent system of the round arch."⁶

Great as the change was, it was very simple, and was the result of analysis applied to the elements of the Roman monuments as it had never been applied by their builders during the high and palmy days of the Empire. On the exterior of their arched walls the Romans had applied the Greek orders, and superposed them as many times as the

⁴ Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, I, chap. 13.

⁵ "The Development of Styles of Architecture" (1881) in Arthur E. Street, *Memoir of George Edmund Street* (London, 1888), p. 361. Schuyler's awareness of the positive architectural quality of Diocletian's palace at Spalato is laudable. The belief that the late Roman complex inaugurated Romanesque style is, however, fantastic. There is no significant relationship between the fourth century Roman work and the Romanesque style of the tenth and eleventh centuries, by which time Diocletian's palace was probably all but forgotten in western Europe, although late Roman elements certainly did influence Romanesque architecture. The architectural elements on which the Freeman-Street hypothesis is based are conveniently summarized in Thomas Graham Jackson, *Byzantine and Romanesque Architecture*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, England, 1920), I, 22f., which Schuyler reviewed (1914-H).

⁶ Specific references unlocated; but see his "Romanesque Architecture," *American Architecture and Building News*, 7 (Jan. 17-Feb. 21, 1880), 28, 37f, 45f, 55f, 66f. On Roman architecture as a "transitional style," see Edward A. Freeman, *Historical and Architectural Sketches: Chiefly Italian* (London, 1876), pp. 25, 189, 216.

building had stories—for the “colossal order” that included several stories was a device reserved for the Renaissance of a thousand years later. In their vaulted interiors, they had retained a piece of the entablature over the column that supported the vault. What the builder of Diocletian’s palace did was to perceive that the entablature into which the lintel was developed in Grecian architecture was superfluous and meaningless in an arched building and to act upon his perception. Obvious as this discovery is, it was not made by the Roman builders of the “classical or transitional” period, and it is not applied even yet in the schools of Europe which still go on inculcating and repeating in official architecture the hybrid of which the final cause was the æsthetic insensibility of the Roman builders. The builder of Diocletian’s palace omitted the entablature, retaining the column and restoring to it the significance it had lost in the applied orders of the Romans by springing the arch directly from its capital. That this should be done with some awkwardness was inevitable in a first essay. In some places the arch itself is but a bent entablature; in others the entablature is retained under the arch, an arrangement which is at least more eligible than that of the classical Romans, whereby it was put over the arch, and the strong thing protected by the weak thing. Nevertheless, the building bears the first evidence in Roman architecture that its designer reasoned upon what he was doing; and it is as purposeful as it is rude. It is doubtful whether it is not its purposefulness as much as its rudeness that has led the modern classicists to look upon it as the work of a decadence rather than of an advance; for it was the living and fruitful germ of all the architecture of Western Europe for the next millennium.

Romanesque architecture, then, as distinguished from the classic that preceded it and from the Gothic it preceded, is that architecture in which the Roman elements of the column and the round arch are disentangled from the Grecian elements which were rendered obsolete by the introduction of an arched construction, but which, in spite of having lost their meaning, had lingered on as survivals during the whole of the Roman classical period. In Romanesque these elements are employed with purpose and meaning, and the architecture of a building becomes again, as in Grecian days, the development and decoration of its structure, with this difference, that the functional modelling which in Grecian architecture is confined to the portico is in Romanesque extended to all the parts. It is this rationalizing of its

elements that distinguishes Romanesque from Roman. But throughout the Romanesque period the elements derived from Roman architecture maintain a separate existence. The column, even when employed as a decorative nookshaft, even when multiplied, and grouped with reference to the differentiation of the structure it supports, or when attached to a pier for the same purpose, continues to assert itself as an independent member. It was only when the development of vaulting, incidentally involving what is commonly called the "invention," but should rather be called the evolution, of the pointed arch, had been carried so far that equilibrium was maintained by the opposition of active forces and not by the mere inertia of brute masses, that the column and the clustered column gave way to the modelled pier, in the modelling of which every member of the vaulted superstructure was represented and foretold, that Romanesque became Gothic, was "re-created" into Gothic, to use the expression of Mr. Charles Herbert Moore, who has given the most comprehensive and interesting account extant of this process of transition.

These changes, the development of Romanesque as well as its re-creation into Gothic, were all the result of the effort to give an artistic expression to an arched construction by the functional modelling of its parts, and it is to this effort that is due the development of the forms that are now recognized as the badges of the style. Romanesque architecture succeeded in attaining such an expression in the simpler construction of arched openings in walls. Gothic attained it in the more complicated construction of arching over spaces, that is to say, of vaulting.

As this is not an historical essay, it suffices to point out this difference in order to indicate that, as we no longer build vaults, or perhaps we should say as we do not yet build vaults, that stage in the progress of mediæval architecture before the vault was artistically developed is perhaps the more fruitful of precedents applicable to the usual problems of the modern architect. Ever since the "plenary inspiration of Vitruvius" began to be called in question by English architects, and consequently by American architects, the earlier as well as the later stage of mediæval architecture has been studied and brought under contribution. In England the insular variety of Romanesque was naturally thought to comprise all Romanesque, insomuch that a generation ago any round-arched building that was evidently not classic

was dismissed compendiously as "Norman." As a matter of fact, however, such of the earlier essays here in Romanesque as were of most interest were suggested by examples of other phases of Romanesque, and resulted from the Romanesque revival introduced into Munich nearly sixty years ago. The Astor library was evidently enough inspired by Gärtner's design for the Royal Library in Munich.⁷ The criticism commonly passed upon the prototype is equally applicable to the later work. Though it is respectable and inoffensive, it is tame and ineffectual. St. George's Church, by Blesch and Eidlitz, now nearly half a century old, is also evidently a result of the Bavarian revival, and owes its being to the Romanesque of the Rhine.⁸ It remains one of the interesting churches of New York, though the relative shortness is a defect in the general composition that the designers did not succeed in dissembling or mitigating, and the parts are of more value than the whole. The open spires, to be sure, are a development of later Gothic, though the towers that carry them are treated with a Romanesque massiveness; but the fine semi-circular apse is plainly suggested by the similar feature in the twelfth-century churches of the Rhine, of which its treatment shows an intelligent analysis. Mr. Eidlitz's Produce Exchange, for which neither its pretentious successor, nor still less the Army Building that now occupies its site, offers any artistic compensation, is as plainly as the church a proof of its author's studies in German Romanesque, and the very effective transeptual arrangement, with the arcaded attic in each of the faces, was as evidently a reminiscence of the works of that style as it was evidently an improvement upon them. The Brooklyn Academy of Music also testifies to its author's admiration for the Wartburg and for Barbarossa's palace at Gelnhausen. In commercial architecture, the American Exchange Bank and the Continental Bank, though many of their details are derived from German Gothic, belong in their general treatment and character to German Romanesque. The Continental Bank is much the more artistic and successful of the two. As an example of harmonious design, in which the lines are developed from basement to cornice, it was not equaled in commercial architecture before the introduction of the

⁷ See above, pp. 141n, 163n. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, (1832-1843; severely damaged in World War II) by Friedrich Gärtner. Schuyler refers to the common tendency of the nineteenth century to describe all round-arched, medieval-inspired buildings as "Norman," when many (and perhaps even most) were derived from German Romanesque.

⁸ For what follows, see above, Schuyler on Eidlitz.

elevator revolutionized that architecture, and it would be hard to show that it has been surpassed since. It would be hard, also, to speak too severely of the absolute insensibility to the fact that they were dealing with a work of art shown by all concerned in putting on the puerile and incongruous addition of two stories, by which the design is now obscured, and the building spoiled. In church-building various phases of Romanesque other than Norman have inspired other examples. So far as it need be classified, Mr. Wray Mould's All Soul's Church, at Fourth avenue and Twentieth street, is a specimen of Italian Romanesque, of which also a church in South Fifth avenue, and another in Second avenue, near Twenty-third street, are faithful but tame examples. A more interesting example was furnished by Mr. Renwick in the design of St. Bartholomew's,⁹ which is noteworthy for the ingenious and generally judicious employment of color. In commercial architecture Mr. Harney's building at Bond street and Broadway,¹⁰ which dates back to the early seventies, though it cannot be called an example of Romanesque, constitutes a tolerably distinct reminiscence of the Norman variety of the style, and a very respectable building it is, in spite of its drawbacks of detail, and an oasis in what has lately become more than ever the dreary architectural desert of middle Broadway. The effect of that thoroughfare from City Hall Park to Grace Church is now more excruciating to a sensitive person than that of almost any other street in New York. It is only fair to remember that it was a very different and a much more respectable street some twelve years ago when Mr. Freeman visited our shores and took Broadway for an illustration of the application of Romanesque to modern exigencies, declaring that in it the main lines of the style were very happily reproduced.¹¹ Though he added that he spoke only of the main lines, without committing himself either to detail or to material, and though Broadway then and Broadway now are two things, the saying remains rather dark. Mr. Freeman is historically, at least, if not æsthetically, our great authority on Romanesque, and he would not have made such a remark without a meaning. The meaning must be that Mr. Freeman has the happy and enviable faculty of not seeing

⁹ We have been unable to identify these churches. On St. Bartholomew's by Renwick & Sands, see above, p. 133n.

¹⁰ Brooks Brothers Store, Bond St. and Broadway, (1873-1874) by George E. Harney (1840-1924).

¹¹ See above, p. 169n.

what is not worth looking at, and if one could have confined his observation of Broadway twelve years ago to buildings that had an architectural interest he would undoubtedly have found the "main lines" of Romanesque very prevalent.

The remark, at any rate, indicates that there were strong men before Agamemnon, and that Romanesque was not unstudied or unknown before the introduction of what everybody who is at all interested in the subject recognizes as the Richardsonian Romanesque. We may paraphrase Mr. Freeman's saying about the architect of Diocletian's palace by saying that our own time and country have been witness to the most extraordinary and widespread influence ever exerted by one man in the progress of the building art, unless we except the work of Sir Christopher Wren. Certainly no architectural career so brief as Mr. Richardson's has been so nearly epoch-making. It lasted but little more than ten years; for the buildings he did on his return from Paris, before his association with Mr. Gambrell,¹² had little that was distinctive, the earliest of them being reminiscences of his academic studies, and done after the straitest sect of French official architecture. The court house at Springfield, finished in 1876, and the North Church, done at the same place and time, were in many ways admirable and they were admired, but they did not exert any marked influence on the practice of American architecture. It was Trinity Church, Boston, that first established his position and gave him his vogue. That was finished in 1877, and its author died in 1886. His professional success was assured by that building, which is an unmistakable example of Provençal Romanesque, though the most striking and successful of its features, the central tower, was obviously enough suggested by the tower of Salamanca.¹³ The Provençal Romanesque, as the historian of it has explained, the whole Romanesque of Southern France, is precisely that variety of Romanesque, excepting only the Italian, in

¹² Richardson associated with Charles Gambrell from 1867 to 1874. The relationship was almost purely a business arrangement, apparently having no influence on Richardson's design. Hitchcock, *Richardson*, pp. 78-162 *passim*. On buildings mentioned immediately below, see Hitchcock. North Congregational Church, Springfield, Mass. (1868-1873).

¹³ While Richardson was casting about for a tower design, the painter John La Farge brought a sheaf of views of European towers into the office, including the Romanesque tower of the Cathedral of Salamanca which became the motif for the Trinity climax. Stanford White, at that time in Richardson's office, is primarily responsible for the final design; *ibid.*, pp. 139f. Ill. of the original sketch appears in *New York Sketch-Book of Architecture*, 1 (May 1874), plate 32.

which the survival of the classic Roman elements unmodified is the most obstinate. In the monuments of Rhenish or of Norman Romanesque the process of de-classicising has been carried so far that it needs historical knowledge to affiliate Worms or Speyer or Bayeux or Caen to the architecture of Imperial Rome. On the other hand, there can be no question in the mind of anybody who has ever seen the monuments of Rome, from which source the fronts of Provence and Anjou and Auvergne are derived, with their rows of classic columns, retaining often the classic entablature, sometimes authentic relics of antiquity, but by their treatment enriched and barbarized into a picturesqueness that was well calculated to captivate a romantic modern mind. It is well worth noticing, too, that in Southern France alone, outside of Italy, has the Byzantine influence been introduced, which in our revival has had so controlling an influence upon carved ornament. St. Mark's does not testify more strongly than the general form of St. Front at Perigueux to the ascendancy of the Lower Empire in those Southern lands, an ascendancy of which the monuments of Normandy and of Norman England and of Germany bear no trace. These were the sources of Richardson's inspiration in the brilliant series of works, the attraction of which has drawn the younger architects of the whole Union into the style in which they were wrought. There is no part of the country in the present building of which his influence is not traceable. It may be said, indeed, that the Provençal Romanesque has come to be more nearly the American style than any that preceded it, with the exception of the American Renaissance, and with this great difference from that, that what we have called the American Renaissance took hold upon the least competent and least sensitive designers of the country, while the Richardsonian Romanesque has influenced the most sensitive and the most competent.

The Romanesque Revival in America¹⁴

We have considered the Romanesque revival first in New York, although New York was neither its starting point nor perhaps contains its most noteworthy examples. But there is so much more and so much costlier building in the biggest and busiest town of a country than in any other that any architectural movement that is general and national is pretty sure to be there most fully reflected and illustrated. We are apt to deplore the conditions of our life as unfavorable to art, and so doubtless in many ways they are; but it is not because we are living in a commercial republic, for it is out of the conditions of republican and commercial cities, from Athens down to Venice, that some of the most energetic and spreading artistic movements have come that the world has ever seen, while it is directly to the commercial and political rivalry of towns that we owe the development of ecclesiastical architecture in France in the thirteenth century, of civil architecture in the Netherlands and of the medieval architecture as well as of the Renaissance architecture of Italy. The palaces of Venice and Florence and Genoa tell us plainly enough that their merchants were princes and their traffickers the honorable of the earth—as plainly as that story is told by Fifth avenue and Commonwealth avenue and Michigan avenue and Rittenhouse square.¹⁵ If the monuments of these latter thoroughfares are upon the whole less admirable than those of the older and transatlantic towns, the cause of the difference must be sought elsewhere than in a difference of the pursuits of those for whom they were built.

¹⁴ *Architectural Record*, 1 (Oct.–Dec. 1891), 151–198. Excerpted.

¹⁵ New York, Boston, Chicago, and Philadelphia respectively.

While New York, then, may not be the American town in which interest in architecture, or in any art, is either most general or most intelligent, it is by dint of mere size and activity that from which most examples can be culled of any architectural movement, whether it be a serious attempt to develop a rational mode of building, like the Gothic revival of twenty years ago or the Romanesque revival of today, or the adoption of a frivolous and fruitless fashion like Queen Anne. The former generation in which Boston boasted itself to be the Athens of America has passed away, and in most respects the boast may now be idle, but Boston is the source of the Romanesque revival which has spread itself over the country, as our illustrations attest, to and beyond the Mississippi. Mr. Richardson himself was a practitioner in New York when he designed Trinity in Boston, and it was undoubtedly the success of that church which began the revival. It was very possibly this success that determined the removal of its author to Boston, where from that time until his death, for the decade that remained to him and that really comprised his artistic career, he devoted himself to showing the applicability of the style in which he wrought to all the problems that came to him for solution. The attempt would have been worth making even if its success had been more questionable, for a common style, an understood way of working, founded upon "a consistent system of construction and decoration," is a chief need, not merely of American architecture but of all modern architecture. In France, and among the Latin nations in general, there is an understood way of working. The trouble with it is that it is not founded upon "a consistent system of construction and decoration" for its decoration, its architecture, is inconsistent with its construction or irrelevant to its construction, and so the style lacks life, and in lacking life lacks the possibility of progress. It seems strange that a style so obviously devoid of logic should have been matured and propagated by a nation that above all things prides itself upon being logical. It has been attacked upon this ground by many Frenchmen, most conspicuously by Viollet-le-Duc, whose literary work was a consistent and continuous protest against the system and the outcome of the architectural instruction of the *École des Beaux Arts*. It was for this reason that when he came to lecture at that institution he was hissed and hooted for a blasphemer by its students, of whom, for all I know, Mr. Richardson may have been one, the very man who was afterwards

to show the advantage that a training in the conventional architecture of France gave to the career of an architectural revolutionist.¹⁶

Trinity¹⁷ was undoubtedly the starting point of the revival, and it would be rash to say that the revival has produced anything better. Those of us who remember the impression produced upon lovers of architecture throughout the country by the publication, in the "New York Sketch Book of Architecture" for 1874,¹⁸ of Mr. Richardson's perspective sketch of the tower of Trinity, remember it as the advent of a new and individual talent, an event that does not happen often in a lifetime to the lover of any art or of all arts.

Then felt they like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken.¹⁹

Their admiration and their glad surprise were not at all diminished if they happened to remember that the work which thus affected them was, in its general form and massing, and in some of its features, a reminiscence of the central tower of Salamanca; for the tower of Trinity is not merely the tower of Salamanca restudied and enriched and improved, but the design of it throughout attests the presence of a more original power than that of the designer of what we must still call the original. This tower is the church, and after fifteen years it remains perhaps the noblest work that American architecture has to show, and certainly the finest and most typical, as it is the first monument of the Romanesque revival. The church has its faults, as its architect well saw, and he endeavored during his lifetime to amend them. Perhaps these may be summed up in one fault, that the work as executed does not sufficiently and at all points subordinate itself to this central and dominant feature, and conduce to its predominance. But it is a fact not less creditable to the aesthetic sensibility of Boston than to the beauty of the work itself, that in the various projects for the

¹⁶ See above, p. 11 n. The phrase cited is Freeman's *Historical and Architectural Sketches*, p. 34.

¹⁷ Reference to Trinity Church, Boston (1873-1877). The evaluation of Trinity which follows would not perhaps be quite the same evaluation today. Fine as the church is, the picturesque proclivities of the nineteenth century accounted for its being somewhat overpraised among Richardson's work at that time. Hitchcock, *Richardson*, pp. 136, 144f, 275f, is primarily responsible for demonstrating that the popular source of Richardson's fame is a less relevant and definitive statement of the meaning of his career than the Marshall Field Wholesale Store in Chicago. At any rate, this latter monument is far more significant as a harbinger of modern architecture. For Schuyler's critique of the Marshall Field Store, see immediately below.

¹⁸ See above, pp. 7ff.

¹⁹ Keats, "Ode on First Looking Into Chapman's 'Homer'."

improvement and completion of the church there is evident as great a reverence for a product of the last quarter of the nineteenth century as if it were a relic of the first half of the thirteenth, and that nothing is likely to be done except under a sense of responsibility which it is almost unexampled to see exhibited with respect to a contemporary monument.²⁰

In church building itself the success of Trinity has not been so fruitful as in some other departments. Mr. Potter's work in New York, which we have already considered,²¹ is nearly all the ecclesiastical architecture in that city which has been directly inspired by Mr. Richardson's example. About the most important church erected since Trinity is the Protestant Episcopal Cathedral in Albany, by Mr. R. W. Gibson,²² a design in a free and somewhat Hispanized English Gothic, which in much of the detail, however, shows a reversion to Romanesque. Mr. Richardson's unsuccessful design for the same building gives promise of a building perhaps upon the whole more successful even than Trinity [Figs. 39-43], and the influence of this design, even more than of his executed work, was visible in many of the designs for the Cathedral in New York.²³ A Presbyterian church at Pittsburgh by Mr. Richardson's successors, Messrs. Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge,²⁴ is an unmistakable and a very successful piece of Richardsonian Romanesque, which owes much of its success to the skill with which the central tower, a lower and much simpler crowning feature than that of Boston, is developed into the church to which the other features of a short nave and shallow transepts are brought into harmonious subordination [Fig. 31]. [Here Schuyler briefly discusses Christ Church in Andover, Massachusetts, by Hartwell and Richardson.]

²⁰ The major addition to Richardson's fabric was the rather academic portal (1897) based on that at St. Gilles in Arles, under Shepley's direction of Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge. For other additions and splendid photographs of the church, see Edgar D. Romig, *The Story of Trinity Church of Boston* (Boston, 1952).

²¹ Holy Trinity, Harlem (not to be confused with Leopold Eidlitz's Church of the Holy Trinity), Lenox Ave. and 122nd St. (1882-1883; completely destroyed by fire 1925), and St. Agnes Chapel, W. 92nd St. near Columbus Ave. (opened 1892; closed as a church 1943; demolished some time after this date), both by William C. Potter. St. Agnes was known for its Tiffany windows. Ills. and substantial discussions of both churches appear in "Romanesque Revival, New York" (1891-C, pp. 10, 16-20), where Schuyler praises them as being among the finest Richardsonian Romanesque buildings in New York.

²² See below, p. 229n. ²³ See below, p. 229-245.

²⁴ † Shadyside Presbyterian Church, Amberson Ave. and Westminster Pl., Pittsburgh, Pa. (1889-1890; extant, with the interior of the church completely, but sympathetically,

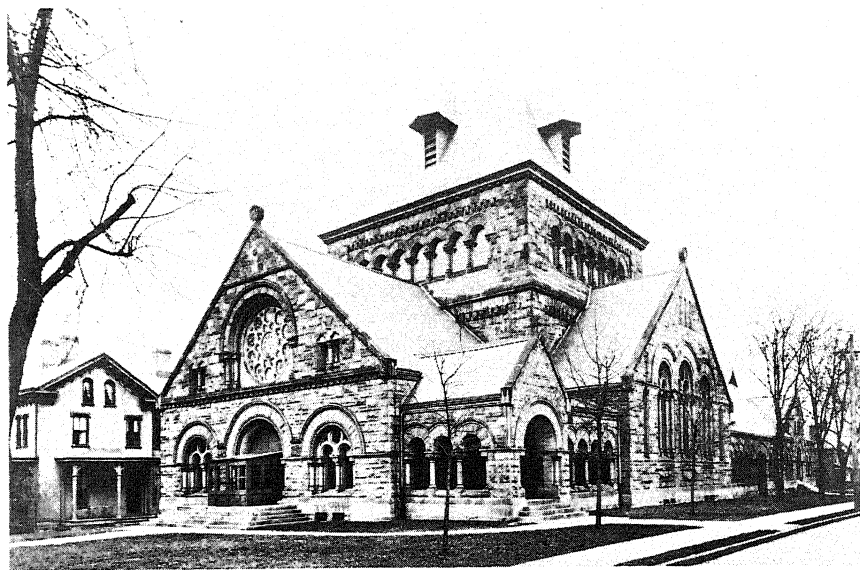


Fig. 31. Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge. Shadyside Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa., 1889-1890.

Nevertheless it is in civic work much more than in ecclesiastical that the influence of Richardson is manifested, and that the Romanesque revival most prevails. Clergymen and laymen who serve upon building committees are still commonly of the opinion that pointed Gothic is more "churchly" than Romanesque, and architects continue to consult their preferences. It is perhaps fortunate that Trinity Church in Boston is very much too large and elaborate and costly to be very often repeated on the same scale, while it is quite impracticable to reduce its scale so as to make it available for a smaller and cheaper church. Otherwise we might see reproductions of it in miniature

remodeled by [Wilson] Eyre & [John Gilbert] McIlvain in 1937-1938, the interior of the chapel by Hoffman & Crumpton 1952-1953). The original building is by (George Foster) Shepley (1860-1903), (Charles Hercules) Rutan (1851-1914) & (Charles Allerton) Coolidge (1858-1936). See ills. and complete discussion in James D. Van Trump, "The Mountain and the City: The History of Shadyside Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, as Seen Through Its Architecture," *Western Pennsylvania Magazine*, 44 (Mar. 1961), 21-34, and "The Romanesque Revival in Pittsburgh," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 16 (Oct. 1957), 22-29; also J. D. Forbes, "Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson and Abbott, Architects: An introduction," *Journal . . . Architectural Historians*, 17 (Oct. 1958), 22. The firm discussed in this last article is the present continuation of Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge, which succeeded to Richardson's practice after his death in 1886.

springing up all over the country, and this would be a result very much to be deplored. Perhaps it is unfortunate that some of its author's civic structures are more easily imitable and adaptable. With intelligent and artistic adaptation there is of course no fault to be found. Have we not just seen how in starting from the lantern of Salamanca, Mr. Richardson himself not only made an advance upon his prototype, but evolved a beautiful tower which is to all intents and purposes a creation? If any architect can do this with the work of any other architect, we shall never say him nay. The success of Mr. Richardson's county buildings at Pittsburgh²⁵ has stimulated countless imitations of which, fortunately, most remain on paper, but one is in course of execution in the Court House of Minneapolis.²⁶ It would not be fair to call this a mere imitation, nor is its execution to be deplored. But its designer would not be apt to deny that the general massing of his building is derived from Mr. Richardson's work, to which some of his competitors adhered even more closely. The Pittsburgh buildings derive their individuality in great part from the conditions of the problem, a pile in intractable granite built in a smoky town in which the deposits of soot threaten to nullify all delicacy of detail and to encumber all projecting members.²⁷ It would be highly unreasonable to reproduce, in a more facile material and in a clearer air, the treatment imposed by these conditions. All that can properly be conveyed from the building and made available elsewhere is precisely the general composition, and this the designer of the Minneapolis Court House has conveyed.

One of the latest civic works of Mr. Richardson, and one of the most successful, is the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce [Fig. 32].²⁸ It is so late indeed that the design was left to be completed by his successors. His peculiar power of simplifying a complicated scheme by seizing upon what is really the most important of its requirements, detaching and emphasizing these, and converting the rest into accessories, has never been more signally illustrated than in this work. The main hall unmistakably asserts itself on the building, in spite of the

²⁵ † Allegheny County Court House and Jail, Pittsburgh, Pa. (1884-1888; extant).

²⁶ See below, p. 297n.

²⁷ Schuyler's concern with the effect of the Pittsburgh atmosphere on Richardson's Court House was a central theme in what could be his original presentation of the building in *Harper's Weekly*, 28 (Feb. 28, 1885), 141, 142.

²⁸ † Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce Building (1885-1888); design by Richardson, executed after his death by Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge.

four stories above it. Odious as comparisons are, it is worth while to compare the effect of this treatment with that of the New York Produce Exchange,²⁹ where the requirements are very similar. The arcades of the hall are in themselves very powerful and impressive, and they gain very greatly in power from the solid bounding towers that give a greater assurance of secure abutment than could be given by an equal space of flanking wall, while these towers are produced above the eaves so as to relieve at once and to accentuate the great pyramidal roof, as pinnacles group themselves about a spire. The skyline is further animated and the monotony of the roof relieved by the tall and picturesque dormers that in their form and arrangement recall those designed by their authors for the Capitol at Albany, but are distinctly more successful. The material of the Cincinnati building, the pink Milford granite, compels a great severity of treatment. Of ornament, strictly so called, there is scarcely any, while the mouldings are such only as are needed to mark the main divisions of the building and to express its construction. Severe as is the treatment of detail throughout, that of the substructure is so much more uncompromising in its severity than that of the superstructure, and this character is so much promoted by the batter of the basement, as to give the superstructure an air of richness and almost of elaboration in comparison. [There follows a discussion of the Boston Chamber of Commerce by Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge, which was under construction as Schuyler wrote.]

After churches, perhaps even without this exception, the most attractive and tempting of problems to a modern architect are the institutions for the promotion of humane culture, the number and importance of which, in our country, attest not merely its wealth but its public spirit and its progress in civilization. In museums and libraries and the like the requirements of the problem, however intractable they may at first appear, will, upon sufficient study, yield to the designer who follows them faithfully, the basis for striking and individual architectural expression. That is to say, they are for the most part really architectural requirements. The most characteristic of our current work is in commercial architecture, of which this cannot be said. In an elevator building, for example, the need for light, especially urgent in the lower stories, makes very difficult the task of

²⁹ George B. Post's New York Produce Exchange; see above, pp. 65n and 166n.



Fig. 32. Henry Hobson Richardson and Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge. Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce Building, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1885-1887.

giving a lofty building a sufficient aspect of massiveness to secure apparent strength and stability, and the designer is tempted to contradict the purpose and character of his building in order to secure this aspect. That a building should be solidest at the bottom and lightest at the top is one of the most elementary of architectural requirements. That it should be lightest at the bottom, that is to say, that its ultimate supports should be attenuated to a minimum, is, in the minds of many owners, an elementary requirement of commercial architecture, and it is this which designers find most embarrassing. The highest successes of our commercial architecture have nevertheless been won by those architects who have not evaded this problem but have attacked it directly, but of course they must wish for a less exacting *donnée*, since even with the best of their works it is necessary to make allowances. It is otherwise with the institutions of which we are speaking. There is, for the most part, no such contradiction involved in them between use and beauty, but the facts of the structure need only to be expressed straightforwardly to tell an interesting story, of which the interest may be enhanced according to the ability of the story-teller. The first of Mr. Richardson's secular works to arrest the attention and to secure the admiration of his profession was the Woburn Town Library, of which the design was published in 1877, just after the completion of Trinity. It was well worthy of the admiration it excited, though it was improved upon in a series of charming works for the same purpose and of the same character at North Easton, Quincy and Malden.³⁰ Perhaps the Crane Memorial Library at Quincy is the most successful and exquisite of these, and certainly it ranks very high among its author's successes. In another place I have expressed what seems to me the essence of Richardson's power of design as the power of simplification, and these buildings seem to illustrate this. Assuredly the series shows a progressive simplification which has its climax in the building at Quincy, where the simplicity would be baldness but for the great art of the adjustment of the three features of the front, the reading-room, the book-room and the entrance, while the interior shows some of the most exquisite of his detail. The series has been admirably supplemented by Mr. Richardson's successors in the truly

³⁰ Woburn (1877-1878); North Easton (1877-1879); Quincy (1880-1883; interior redecorated by Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson & Abbott 1957); Malden (1883-1885); all in Massachusetts, all extant and in good condition.

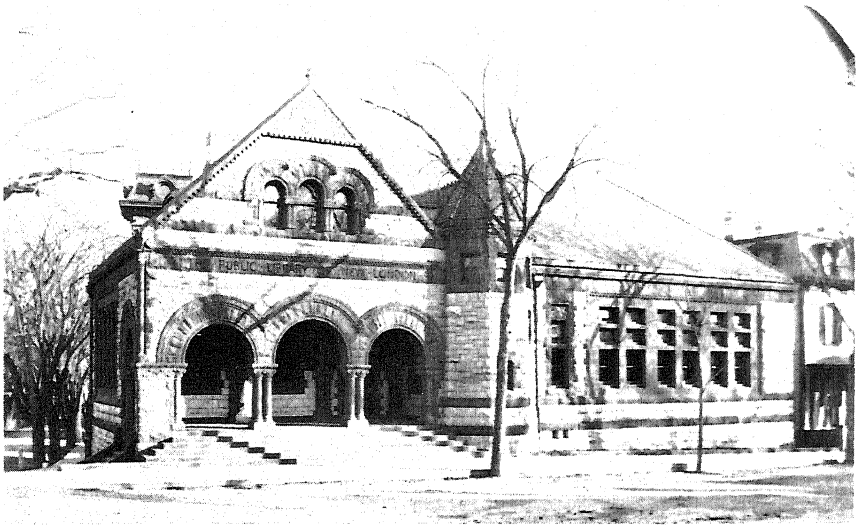


Fig. 33. Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge. New London Public Library, New London, Conn., 1890.

Richardsonian Public Library at New London,³¹ where the two features of the front, the arcade of the entrance and the large lintelled openings of the reading-room are cleverly harmonized by the introduction between them of a third feature in the polygonal turret, and where the chief defect of the design at Quincy, the leanness of the terminal pier of the colonnade, is obviated by an emphatic flank of wall [Fig. 33]. The success of this beautiful little building is another illustration, as indeed the progressive success of Mr. Richardson's own series of libraries is an illustration, of the wisdom of employing again and refining upon a motive already employed, rather than of abandoning it because at some points it fails to satisfy the designer, in favor of a radically different motive to be in turn worked out crudely and in turn abandoned. [There follows a discussion of the Romanesquoid Memorial Hall for Lawrenceville School (1885), Lawrenceville, New Jersey (the first of thirteen buildings designed for the school by Peabody & Stearns through 1902), and the American Unitarian Building (1885) in Boston, also by Peabody & Stearns. Schuyler illustrates both buildings.]

³¹ † Public Library, New London, Conn., (1890; extant) by Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge.

A striking illustration of Mr. Richardson's passion for simplification was furnished in his design for a public building in Buffalo, of which the requirements were that it should contain not only a large and growing library and a reading-room, but a museum of fine arts and an historical collection.³² The enumeration of these requirements does not indicate a simple building, much less a building of one feature as their outcome, and as a matter of fact the projectors of the building accompanied their invitation to competing architects with a sketch plan that was of considerable complication, since it had not merely to provide for these varied requirements, but to be adjusted to a site of irregular shape. Nevertheless, by disregarding this plan and putting his building on the site in his own way, Mr. Richardson managed to evolve a design of which the principal front is in effect a single feature, a long arcade abutted by two round towers and broken only by the steep gable of the porch at its centre. To this feature a very plain basement of lintelled openings below and a blank wall surmounted by a skylight above served as foils. It was a very interesting design, and the more so by reason of the complete subordination of the front to its principal feature. The accepted and executed design by Mr. C. L. W. Eidlitz worked upon the lines of the imposed plan, and the designer's effort is evidently enough to express in his building the different purposes of its parts, while at the same time bringing them together and binding them into an architectural unity [Fig. 34]. This latter purpose is the main object of the tower which is meant to unite and dominate the parts. Any requirement of a building that is in itself legitimate is a potential source of architectural expression, and may become the cause of an architectural effect, and this is a truth that is too generally forgotten by architects who, in despair of making an effective piece of architecture out of the requirements they are striving to satisfy, mask the work they are really doing with a screen of architecture derived from some other source than a consideration of these

³² † Buffalo Public Library and Art Building, cor. Washington St. and Broadway, (competition 1884; completed 1887; extant) by Cyrus L. W. Eidlitz. Schuyler also discusses this building in "Cyrus L. W. Eidlitz" (1896-B, pp. 415f). Although in the competition program the trustees specified an irregular mass to express the different functions of the building on its irregular site, Richardson disregarded these stipulations in submitting a simple rectangular block. His design has been lost, although Schuyler informs us (see below, p. 298) that it served as the inspiration for the Minneapolis Public Library. Cyrus L. W. Eidlitz followed the competition specifications closely. See Schuyler's more detailed account of the building (1896-B, pp. 415f).

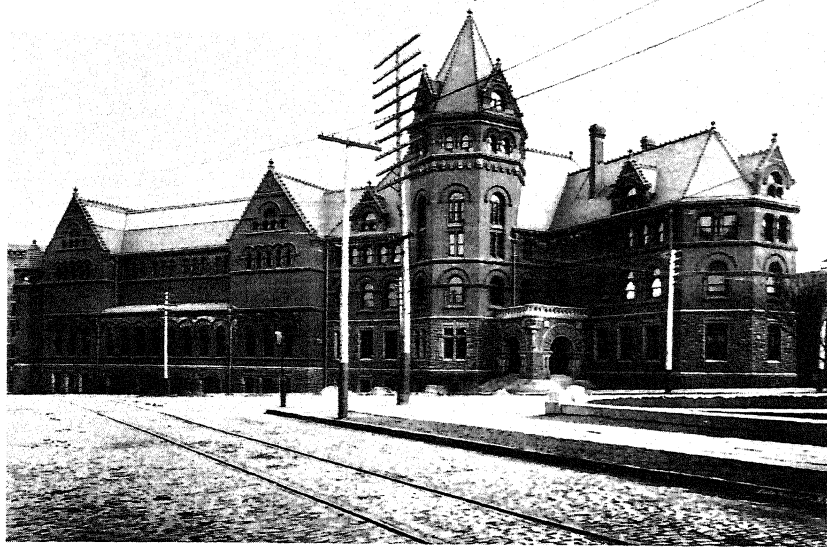
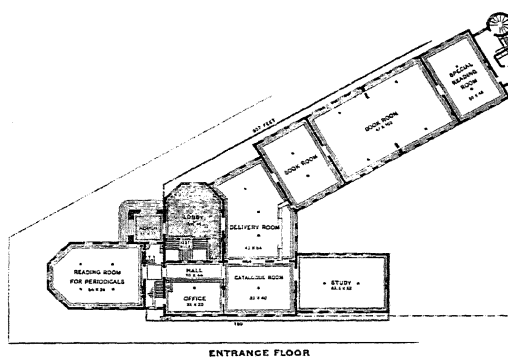


Fig. 34. Cyrus L. W. Eidlitz. Buffalo Public Library and Art Building, Buffalo, N. Y., 1884-1887.



Plan of the ground floor.

requirements. Nobody will dispute that all the varied purposes of the building are expressed in Mr. Eidlitz's design, while the tendency of an expressive treatment of such a scheme on such a site to "scatter" and to produce a straggling building, that is a congeries of parts rather than a whole, is effectively counteracted by the introduction of the tower, at the point where the abrupt change of axis of the building presents the chief architectural difficulty of the problem. The tower does evidently bind the buildings together and thus serves its purpose, while the detail, everywhere a modelling and modification of the masses, is very well adapted to further the impression of weight and solidity which the disposition of the masses gives, as well as the impression of picturesqueness which arises from the unusual arrangement. "Picturesqueness" in architecture, by the way, so far as it is an admirable quality, always gives the impression of being a casual and accidental result, and is always offensive when it is perceived to have been sought and premeditated. In this instance the picturesqueness of the building so evidently proceeds from the conditions of the problem that it is attractive by reason of its unsought and unforced character. The most conspicuous of the detail of the building is in the entrance, of which an illustration was given in the first number of this magazine.³³ The position of this feature helps to dissemble the change of axis, and thus to further the purpose for which the tower is introduced, while its detail is truly and admirably Romanesque both in its massiveness, and in the fact, which is everywhere evident, that it is literally a "detailing" of the mass, and not the addition of anything extraneous. This last, of course, may equally be said of Gothic design, and indeed, in spite of its massiveness, and of the fact that none of its round arches are pointed, the general treatment of the building is such that its expression is as near to that of a sturdy Gothic as of an elaborated Romanesque, and that few changes could be needed to convert it into an unquestionably Gothic building, although it is quite plain that the architect had no intention of preserving academic purity or of presenting an example of any historical style. The Gothic and aspiring character of the design of the Buffalo building is given to it mainly by the frequent gables, and it is equally evident in another work of the same author, a design for a museum at San Diego, California, in

³³ *Architectural Record*, 1 (July-Sept. 1891), 54.

spite of a detail equally Romanesque.³⁴ This is a building on an unrestricted site and presents a front generally symmetrical, though the symmetry is obtained in the Gothic manner by a balance of masses rather than in the classic manner of providing for every feature on one wing its exact counterpart on the other. It is a very successful design, although the gabled centre of the principal block, in itself a very good composition, offers perhaps an incongruity with the treatment of the roofs elsewhere, and the treatment of the crowning member of the tower leaves something to be desired. But the device is especially effective by which the base of this tower is incorporated with the building, while its shaft detaches itself at the cornice line, and the arcade of the nearer angle is a vigorous and effective piece of design, to which the expression of an abutment otherwise scarcely adequate is secured by the solid corbelled turrets at the corners.

A church in Baltimore, comprising also a group of parochial buildings, by Messrs. McKim, Mead and White, is one of the happiest examples of the skill of those designers and almost if not quite a unique essay of theirs in Romanesque, albeit its Romanesqueness appears rather in character than in detail [Fig. 35].³⁵ It owes its effect, indeed, more to the vigor of its massing and to the success of the general composition than to any felicity of detail. It is to pay a high compliment to a modern building to say that it is better in mass than in detail, and better in perspective than in elevation, and this may truly be said of the work under consideration. It is a modern "auditorium church" and the amphitheatrical sweep is perfectly expressed. Its expression gives rise to difficulties that are two-fold, first in allying this central oval to the rectangular buildings that surround it and next in bringing the steep and conspicuous roof of the auditorium into harmonious subjection to the tower, which is a feature yet more important. These difficulties have been vanquished so completely that the ordinary observer is scarcely led to suspect that they existed, while the critical observer is forced to admire the results of what he perceives to have been the long and patient study by which the various masses are brought into a whole that has so much variety in its unity, and that is so complete a composition both from the point of view from which our illustration is taken and from the opposite point of view. Its success

³⁴ † Project for San Diego Museum (never built) by Cyrus L. W. Eidlitz. A search for details of this competition has proved fruitless.

³⁵ See above, p. 43f and 44n.

is enhanced by the material employed, a very dark stone used rough-faced for the walls and a dark glazed tile for the roofs. One can indeed wish that a design so successful should have been more carefully wrought out in detail. The masses here are so powerful that they would have borne a much higher elaboration than they have received, and that the spectator might have been led to linger over the parts with the same admiration that is extorted by the aspect of the whole. Rudeness is the defect of the quality of massiveness that so eminently belongs to Romanesque, but it is not in itself an artistic quality. The great solid tower is the most successful as it is the chief feature of the design and in the mass it is singularly impressive. But its massiveness and its solidity need not have been compromised, nay, they might have been promoted by a more careful modelling of its parts. A shaft of ten stages of rock-faced wall, the stages divided by unmoulded offsets, at each of which the tower is diminished in area, each pierced at the centre by one slit or by three, and the whole crowned by a steep hood is, as we see, a very striking object, but with the treatment that it receives here it has an effect of rudeness and archaism that seems affected and that has a dangerous tendency to convert it, in spite of its evidently structural character and of its mass, into "scene painters' architecture." It is as rude as an Irish round tower of the twelfth century, or as one of the earliest efforts of the Lombard builders in Italy. These structures are admirable for their *naïveté*, but an intentional *naïveté* such as the modern architect exhibits when he reproduces their rude work in spite of later developments of it which they could not know and of which he cannot help knowing, is not *naïveté* at all, but affectation. The quality of his work is not simplicity but *simplesse*, and so far as it appears tends to mar an admirable work. Surely there would have been no detriment to the vigor or solidity of this tower if its upper stage had been somewhat opened and somewhat lightened so as to become really a belfry stage, and if the summit had been so treated as to prepare for the hood of the roof. As it is, this hood seems to have been casually dropped upon an unfinished tower, and this is an effect the designer cannot have intended. All the same, it would take a much worse fault to neutralize the impression of power that is given to the pile by the disposition of its masses, and the contribution that every member of it makes to the total effect.

[There follows a discussion of various business and institutional build-

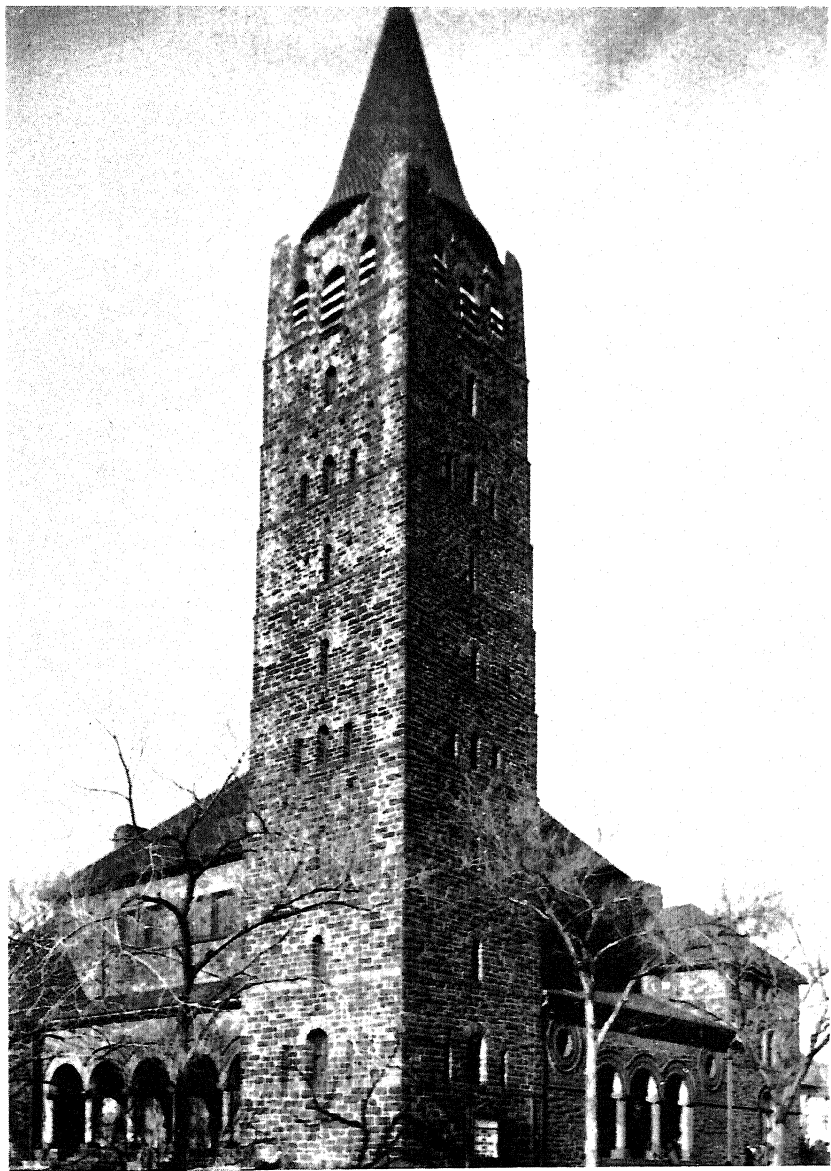


Fig. 35. McKim, Mead & White. St. Peter's (now Lovely Lane)
Methodist Church, Baltimore, Md., 1883-1887.

ings of two or three stories, none of which is worth mentioning save for Wyatt and Sperry's Mercantile Trust and Deposit Co. (1885), Baltimore, Maryland. Only nominally "Romanesque," the severely walled quality of the block and its articulation by moldings and coloristic equivalents within the plane of the wall make it appear to Schuyler almost "Néo-Grec." Illustrated by Schuyler; see also Wilber H. Hunker, Jr., and Charles H. Elam, *Century of Baltimore Architecture* (Baltimore, Md., 1917), plate 31. The discussion then moves to tall buildings in the Romanesque, whose design stemmed from the Marshall Field Wholesale Store.]

It is in "elevator architecture," however, that the test of the applicability of a style to commercial uses must be sought, while it is in elevator architecture that it is most clearly out of the question to produce examples of Romanesque or of any other historical style. It is like attempting to write an essay upon the events of the day in classic Latin. It cannot be done without the use of locutions

*That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp.*³⁶

One can of course use Romanesque details, and even Romanesque features in unmistakably modern buildings; and one can, if he have skill enough, give a Romanesque character, the character of massiveness and simplicity, of "rest and immobility," even to a modern warehouse or office-building. One of the most interesting essays in this kind is the Lionberger warehouse in St. Louis,³⁷ of which the design was obviously enough suggested by Mr. Richardson's very impressive Field building in Chicago [Figs. 36, 51]. Like that, this is but of seven stories, and so much more manageable than if it were taller, and it has the further advantage of an ample area, though by no means so great as that of its vast prototype. The chief resemblances are in the segmental arches of the basement, of which the treatment is almost identical, except that in the later work they are continued to the ground, in the great arcade of three stories next above the basement and in the rugged and almost cyclopean expression of the masonry. The differences are marked and interesting. In the Field building

³⁶ Milton, *Sonnets*, xi, "A book was writ of late . . ."

³⁷ † Lionberger Warehouse, also known as Ely & Walker's Dry Goods Co., SW cor. Washington and 8th Sts., St. Louis, Mo., (1887-1888; destroyed by fire 1897) by Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge. Schuyler refers to it as the "Limberger" building. See J. D. Forbes, *Journal . . . Architectural Historians*, 17, 20f.



Fig. 36. Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge. Lionberger Warehouse,
St. Louis, Mo., 1887-1889.

there is no lateral division except what is enforced by the great openings and is recognized above by the piers of the upper arcade and by the piers of the colonnaded attic. This treatment of course emphasizes the lateral extent of the building, and is more appropriate to a building of great magnitude where it is practicable to arrange a series of openings innumerable, or not readily numerable, by the eye, than in a building of moderate dimensions. In the later building, the division into bays is insisted upon and marked by a projecting strip of pier which is continued downward from the attic until it merges into the battering basement. The attic of the Field building, in spite of the interruptions caused by the reappearance of the lower piers, is virtually almost a continuous colonnade, while in the Lionberger building it consists of three square openings in each bay, and enforces the division below. All these changes may be regarded as due to the changed conditions

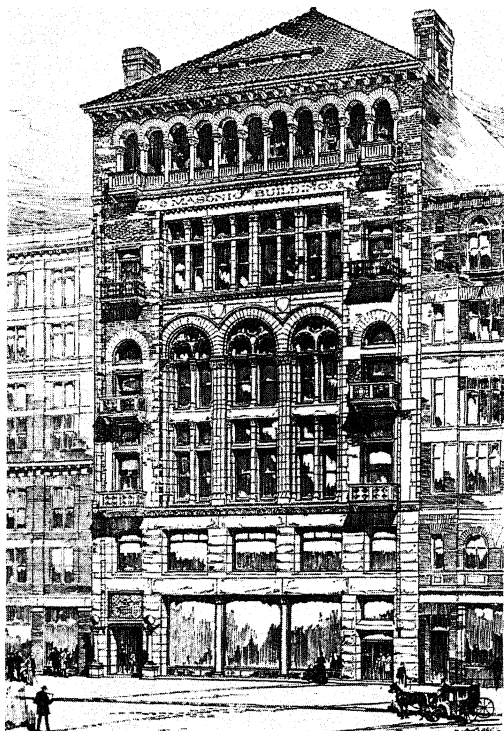


Fig. 37. Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge. Masonic Building, Pittsburgh, Pa., 1889.

of the problem in which, the magnitude not being of itself so impressively great, it is the less desirable to make sacrifices to its development; and they do not necessarily imply any criticism upon the model. It is otherwise with the substitution, above the great arcade, of two stories of lintelled openings, four in each bay, for the two-story arcade of the Field building, with openings doubled over each of the larger openings below. Doubtless this change implies a criticism, and the criticism seems to be just, whether or not it has been quite successfully obviated. Without doubt the superposition of the arcades is the least successful point of design in the Field building, since the scale of the upper is not so much less as to make it cooperate with the lower, or seem a subordinate appendage to it, but allows the upper to assert itself as an independent and competing member of the composition. The same defect appears in the design of the New York Produce Exchange.³⁸

³⁸ George B. Post's New York Produce Exchange, see above, pp. 65n and 166n.

The change of motive in the St. Louis warehouse is therefore not a capricious variation, and the two tiers of lintelled openings do not compete directly with the arcade, though it cannot be said that they directly cooperate with it or contribute to its effect, as would be necessary to the complete success of the design. A more successful composition in this respect is that of the Masonic building in Pittsburgh,³⁹ a front of six stories in dark brown stone. Here the basement is of two stories, while a tall arcaded attic of a single story traverses the whole front, whereas below, the centre of the building, three openings wide, is framed between wings more massively treated, and each pierced in each story with a single opening much smaller than the openings of the centre [Fig. 37]. This arrangement allows of the introduction of a store front with supports as attenuated as a store front demands, but which is saved from the disastrous result that usually ensues from such attenuation, both by the solidity of its frame and by the general massiveness of the treatment. Above this the central division consists of three tall stories, of which the openings of the upper are lintelled, with mullions and transoms, while the other two, though grouped by the continuation of the openings, which are closed by traceried arches, are nevertheless sharply distinguished from each other by an emphatic transom at the floor line. The feature thus formed, and effectively framed by the flanking piers, evidently consists of three members, of which the uppermost is an effective culmination, as neither the two-story arcade of the Field building, nor the two stories of lintelled openings of the Lionberger building can be said to be.

Perhaps part of this difference may be attributed to the greater difficulties of design that a building of seven stories presents over one of six. However that may be, it is certain that the difficulties of the designer of an elevator building, properly so called, increase very much more than directly as its height. The Ames building in Boston presents one of the really crucial problems of elevator architecture, a building of moderate area and of immoderate altitude, of which all the stories are to be put to the same or very similar uses [Fig. 38]. So successfully has this problem been solved in the Ames building that this edifice has been chosen by Professor Kerr, in his continuation of Fergusson's "History of Modern Architecture,"⁴⁰ as the typical specimen of

³⁹ † Masonic Building, Pittsburgh, Pa., (1889) by Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge.

⁴⁰ † See above, p. 66n. The Ames Building is the single American skyscraper illustrated in James Fergusson, *History of the Modern Styles of Architecture*, 3rd revised ed. by Robert Kerr (New York, 1891), p. 368.



Fig. 38. Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge. Ames Building, Boston, Mass., 1889.

American elevator architecture; and it would be hard to make a better choice. A three-story basement of light granite carries an eight-story superstructure of light sandstone, which in turn is surmounted by an arcaded attic and a cornice of very great projection, an incident of which is still another story. With a fourteen-story building, on a site of not much more than 6,000 feet in area, a tower-like treatment is absolutely enforced; and such a treatment has been carried out here, upon the whole with brilliant success. Nothing could well be happier than the design of the basement, in which the designer had the advantage of one story considerably more important than the others, and which of itself has an unmistakable and harmonious triple division. Nor does the treatment of the upper member of the composition leave anything to be desired. In such a building, where it is impracticable to exhibit the actual roof, the summit, as all architects of successful spireless towers have found, must be strongly marked and the roof that cannot be shown must be suggested; and here this purpose is admirably attained by the spreading cornice. The central and chief division, the shaft of the tower, so to say, is not only justly and effectively proportioned to its supporting and to its crowning member, but it is very effectively framed between the plain and solid corners that give an assurance of strength and stability. In the design of the stories thus fortified there arises the same difficulty that we have noted in the Field building and in the Lionberger building. The motive of the latter has been adopted here, and an arcade of five stories carries three stories of lintelled openings, with the effect less of a combination than of a competition. We may grant that an identical treatment of eight stories would be intolerably monotonous, though with the variety secured here by the treatment of the basement and the attic that does not seem quite certain. At any rate, in a building that has a general triple division, the subdivision of one of the principal divisions into two masses, of which one is not a mere appendage to the other, seems an error. At least the result of it is not completely fortunate in any one of the three buildings in which we have been considering it. If the predominant member of the composition must be subdivided, it seems that it must again be triply subdivided like the whole into a beginning, a middle and an end of its own, as is so effectively done in the front of the Masonic building at Pittsburgh. The defect thus indicated does not prevent the Ames building from being a very impressive and

dignified work, equally admirable in mass and in detail, and perhaps the most successful example in the country of the adaptation of Romanesque architecture to an extreme requirement of "elevators building."

[Stations and houses end the discussion of specific buildings, before Schuyler concludes the article with generalization.]

Such an array of buildings in so many different kinds, some admirable, many suggestive and nearly all in some degree interesting, constitutes at once an impressive demonstration of the extent to which the Romanesque revival has already gone, and a promise that in the future it may go further and fare better. What we have called the Richardsonian Romanesque has for the most part been done within the past five years, within the years that have elapsed since the death of Mr. Richardson himself. While he was living and practising architecture, architects who regarded themselves as in any degree his rivals were naturally loth to introduce in a design dispositions or features or details, of which the suggestion plainly came from him. Since his death has "extinguished envy" and ended rivalry, the admiration his work excited has been freer to express itself either in direct imitation or in the adoption and elaboration of the suggestions his work furnished. These pages have furnished illustrations of both these processes. The body of Romanesque work in this country is now more extensive, and upon the whole more meritorious than the building of any style which our architects had previously taken as the point of departure for a "movement," excepting only the Gothic revival. That an architect must build upon the past is plain enough. It is equally plain that if he means to produce an artistic result, he must select, as a starting point, some phase of past architecture in which a definite style, "a consistent system of construction and decoration,"⁴¹ has already been attained. Rightly construed, this apparent limitation is not a real limitation. It does not forbid eclecticism, as we have seen in several of the most interesting works illustrated in these papers; it requires only that eclecticism shall be so conducted as not to impair the impression of artistic unity, of style, of "a consistent system of construction and decoration." One may compose well in any style that fulfills this definition, and may add to it details and features which the past practitioners of the style did not use, just as one may write well and purely in any language without confining himself to the vocabulary of its classical

⁴¹ See above, p. 202n.

literature when he has something new to express. A style like a language is dead when it ceases to grow and change. This is a very different thing from a hodge-podge of eclecticism which attests either the eclectic's ignorance of "styles" or his insensibility to style, or both. We do not look for any masterpieces of prose or verse in Volapük.⁴² Nor is the selection of an historical style as a starting-point inconsistent with life and progress, provided the style chosen be in itself rational and consistent, and provided it be chosen as a point of departure. The style which has prevailed throughout continental Europe for three centuries is not such a style. It is not a consistent system of construction and decoration, because it uses one system of construction as the decoration of another system of construction. It is essentially the "classical or transitional Roman,"⁴³ and no progress in it is possible until it is freed of its inherent contradictions. The Romanesque builders, as we have seen, freed it of its contradictions, giving the antique column a function to perform in an arched construction, and discarding altogether the antique entablature. The French architects have, indeed, made essays towards rationalizing their official style, as in the omission of the orders in such a building as the library of Ste. Geneviève, or as the reversion to a lintelled construction in such a building as the Faculty of Medicine [Fig. 159], but these isolated exceptions emphasize the rule of irrationality.⁴⁴ For our purpose the choice of a point of departure may be taken to lie between the two phases of mediaeval architecture. The Gothic we have already tried, and in spite of much earnest and intelligent and some brilliant work, it failed to "impose itself." The reason is not very far to seek. In the hands of all but its strongest practitioners the American variety of Victorian Gothic became a thing of shreds and patches, of which the effect was so uneasy that the judicious observer was often led to wish that the incompetent designer had remained in the comparative safety of the American Renaissance. The expression even of the historical masterpieces of

⁴² An artificial language of eight vowels and nineteen consonants invented in 1879 by Johann M. Schleyer of Constance, Baden, and designed for international use.

⁴³ This is the chapter title of Edward A. Freeman's discussion of Roman architecture in *History of Architecture* (London, 1849); "transitional" because Freeman considers the pre-eminent significance of Roman architecture to have been its development of vaulted construction which only received consistent architectural treatment in Romanesque building. See above, pp. 193f.

⁴⁴ On the Néo-Grec movement to which Schuyler refers, see above, pp. 76f and 82, below, pp. 515f and 591f. Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, Paris, (1843-1850) by Henri Labrousse (1801-1875). Faculté de Médecine, see below, p. 592n.

Gothic art, doubtless the most wonderful and intellectually the most admirable of all the works of man in the art of building, is the expression of ideas and sentiments that do not belong to our time. Mr. Moore contends, with much force, that the only truly Gothic building is a fully developed cathedral;⁴⁵ and indeed it is evident that the vast repertory of detail and of ornament which Gothic architecture has bequeathed to us was very largely developed from the buttress-system of which the cathedral was the perfect and typical example. Romanesque is, indeed, not applicable to all our needs. It is essentially and almost exclusively an architecture of stone-work. It furnishes no precedents for timber construction, and very few for brick-work, since a building in which brick is used merely for the fields of wall, and stone for the features, is not an example of an architecture of baked clay. Nevertheless, Romanesque may be commended as a point of departure for modern architects precisely because it has never reached its ultimate perfection, as Gothic did. There is not in the world what may be called a completely typical specimen of Romanesque in the sense in which there are completely typical specimens of Greek Doric or of French Gothic. In this there is still room for improvement, for development. As the besetting tendency of Gothic is to tenuity and complication and unrest, so the besetting tendency of Romanesque is to clumsiness and crudity and rudeness.⁴⁶ Where mass and weight and power are to be expressed it leaves nothing to be desired, but we can scarcely point either in the original or thus far in the revived Romanesque, to a design that can fairly be called "elegant." Yet elegance is a quality as suitable for architectural expression as force, and no style can be accounted complete until it is adequate to every expression. It is in this direction that modern architects may develop Romanesque into the elegance of later Gothic,⁴⁷ without direct resort to Gothic precedents, and without losing the vigor and massiveness of Romanesque as we know it, where these qualities are required. It is not by any means a question of pointed arches or round. History shows plainly enough that the pointed arch was introduced, not at all because the

⁴⁵ See above, p. 191n.

⁴⁶ Compare with Leopold Eidlitz's point of view in *Nature and Function of Art*; see above, pp. 31f.

⁴⁷ Schuyler returns to this idea in mentioning Stanford White's portals modeled on those for St. Gilles for St. Bartholomew's in New York. See above, p. 45f, 132f and below, p. 228. The same theme appears in "American Cathedral" (1892-A), pp. 240f, and see above, p. 41n.

designers who introduced it preferred its form to that of the round arch, but because they needed it as a constructive expedient in the development of the vaulting system. The proof is furnished by the many transitional buildings in which the builders used round arches where they could and pointed arches only where they must, and the apertures of the walls were at last pointed only in order to conform to the structural arches, the form of which was determined by their function. We are no longer bound by the exigencies of a vaulting system, and the development of Romanesque in the direction of elegance and refinement, which is the one thing needful to adapt it to all that we require of an architecture in masonry, need not take again the same direction which it took in the thirteenth century. A too literal adherence to Romanesque precedents on the part of a modern architect does not, as we have seen, reproduce the effect of simplicity and *naïveté* that is made by the work of the early Romanesque builders who were working towards the solution of problems which their successors solved, and of which we know the solution. What was childlike in their work is childish in ours. It is by beginning where they left off and not where they began—by taking their work as a point of departure and not as a point of arrival, that the architects of our day can create the beginnings of a true and living architecture, such as for four centuries the world has not seen. The Romanesque revival in this country is the most promising sign of such a movement that has yet appeared.

Recent Church Building in New York⁴⁸

The observation which first forces itself upon one who goes about Manhattan to find out what is doing in church architecture is how completely the Romanesque revival has spent its force. The revivalist has been dead but fifteen years, and the revival scarcely outlived him. There is hardly a parallel, even in our American way of treating architecture as a mere matter of fashion, to this "movement" so sudden, so swift and so sweeping, which subsided as swiftly and as suddenly as it arose. And this is the more a pity because the Romanesque, in the Richardsonian version of it, gave a more rational promise in church building than in almost any other of its phases. Richardson's own first success was won with Trinity Church in Boston. That building had a more immediate and general effect upon American architecture than any other ever erected in this country, and it would be impossible to point to any other work of its author which deserved it better.

True, Trinity, like the other successes of its author, was very largely a personal and incommunicable success, and so far independent, one may say, of the architectural language in which it was composed. And yet there is very much to be said in favor of Romanesque as the most suitable style for church architecture. Mr. Freeman characteristically found in it the most suitable style for all American building, and this, although it was not the "Teutonic" variety of it which most excited his admiration in American commercial buildings, and, of course, he wrote before the elevator and the steel frame had had their way, and accomplished what should have been a revolution.⁴⁹ In church building, it is to be said that we no longer build vaults, and that the transformation of Romanesque into Gothic was historically due to the develop-

⁴⁸ *Architectural Record*, 13 (June 1903), 509-534. Excerpted.

⁴⁹ See above, p. 169n.

ment and the expression of the vaulted system. This has been shown by many writers, most recently and most interestingly by Mr. Charles Herbert Moore.⁵⁰ Gothic architecture is so exclusively the development, mechanical and artistic, of the vaulting system, that Mr. Longfellow, in his recent volume of essays, avowedly omits it as "out of line" with the general history of architecture.⁵¹ Be that as it may, it is quite certain that the characteristic forms of Gothic architecture, beginning with the pointed arch itself, arose from the requirements of vaulted building and lose much of their appropriateness, all of their "inevitability," and much of the charm which comes from their appropriateness, when they are employed in a building of which the interior is not vaulted. The logical inference would be that when we abandon vaulting we should abandon the architecture that grew out of vaulting and depends upon it, and revert to the architecture to which vaulting is not essential, that is to say, to the Romanesque. For Gothic was not a completion of the Romanesque, but a transformation of it, an interruption of it. Romanesque was left unfinished by the irruption of its successor, and the development and completion of it on its own lines was a work that might well appeal to ambitious modern architects. As a matter of fact, the promising beginnings that were made in it in church architecture during the lifetime of the revivalist, and of which, perhaps, the most noteworthy and successful example in New York was St. Agnes's, on the West Side, were abandoned almost at once after his death.⁵² The one recent example of Romanesque is an addition to a Romanesque church of the pre-Richardsonian period, and that is Mr. Stanford White's very interesting and successful porch, or frontispiece, to St. Bartholomew's in Madison Avenue.⁵³ It is odd that, within a few years after the death of James Renwick, one of the

⁵⁰ See above, p. 191n.

⁵¹ William P. P. Longfellow, *The Column and the Arch* (New York, 1899), in a series of historical essays tracing major developments in the use of the column and arch followed one on Romanesque with another on the Renaissance. In his preface (p. v) he observed, "I have passed by the Byzantine style because it was a collateral development, and outside the cycle which, beginning with Greek architecture, returned upon itself in the Renaissance. For a like reason I have touched but lightly on the Gothic, a splendid growth that structurally was the completion of the Romanesque, but, as a matter of form, was *hors de ligne*, like the Byzantine, and like it had no successor; for the logical predecessor of the Renaissance was the Romanesque, and the development of the older forms was finished when they merged in the pointed Gothic." In short, Longfellow concentrated on what he conceived to be the historical background for Beaux Arts classicism, except for a preliminary chapter on Egyptian architecture.

⁵² See above, p. 203n.

⁵³ See above, p. 133n.

most successful architects of his generation, additions should be under construction to three of his most noteworthy churches, a lady chapel to the Cathedral in Fifth Avenue, a chancel to Grace Church in Broadway, and this new front in St. Bartholomew's.⁵⁴ It is really, the new work, a beautiful success, and as congruous with the old work, perhaps, as is compatible with successfulness. The only unfavorable criticism it suggests is that it is perhaps too visibly an application and an afterthought, a sheathing and screening of the old front, upon which, however, it does not pour any unnecessary contempt. So much of its success as depends upon sumptuousness of material, and that is a good deal, the original architect would very likely have been willing enough to add, if he could have afforded it, and so much also as comes from much more skilful carving, exclusive of the sculpture proper, than was at his or any architect's command when St. Bartholomew's was built. But the architect of the addition has shown that it was distinctly within the original architect's power to have arrived at a combination of material which would have given contrast without crudity, and the addition doubtless does put to shame the violence of the original contrast of color, and the crudity of much of the original detail in form. The new work is quite as distinctly Italian Romanesque as the old. But it shows, and it is the most valuable showing that it makes, that Romanesque may, without ceasing to be Romanesque, express elegance and refinement as well as the rude massiveness, to which Richardson with such tremendous vigor, and his followers with so much less, limited its application. In this respect, although the style is probably not that which the later designer would have chosen if he had been free to choose, the new work is most suggestive and even exemplary. It deepens one's regret that our architects, under no greater compulsion than that of a mere caprice of fashion, should have abandoned the experiment of a Romanesque revival without waiting to follow it out into other lines and to other expressions than it took when it was "personally conducted" by the revivalist who so widely and yet so briefly "imposed it." . . .

⁵⁴ St. Patrick's Cathedral, 5th Ave. between 50th and 51st Sts. (commissioned 1853; plans accepted 1858; completion except for spires 1879; spires 1888; extant); Grace Church, Broadway at 10th St. (1843-1846; chancel enlarged 1878; extant); both by James Renwick (1818-1895). Schuyler here refers to the addition of a Lady Chapel (1901-1906) to St. Patrick's by Charles T. Matthews, and the further enlargement of the chancel of Grace Church (1902-1903) by Heins & La Farge, as well as the addition of Stanford White's portals to St. Bartholomew's. On Grace Church, see William R. Stewart, *Grace Church and Old New York* (New York, 1924).

An American Cathedral⁵⁵

I

The saying that ours is not a cathedral-building age is so obviously true, and so familiar, that the proposal to erect in New York the most important religious monument on this side of the Atlantic strikes many, and perhaps most, cultivated persons with a sense of incongruity. It is so especially true that this is not a cathedral-building country that an American cathedral seems a violation of the unities in place not less than in time—an anastrophe as well as an anachronism. It is a reflection calculated to give us pause that even while we were considering what should be the character of an American cathedral in the city of New York,⁵⁶ the Assembly of the State, being in possession of what was

⁵⁵ *American Architecture*, pp. 86–111. Reproduced in full with all the original line cuts. H. H. Richardson and Robert W. Gibson (1854–1927), an Albany architect who later practiced in New York, were invited to submit schemes for All Saints Episcopal Cathedral in Albany. Gibson's design was chosen (dedicated 1884; still incomplete, last major construction 1902–1904). For R. W. Gibson's design, see *Harper's Weekly*, 28 (Apr. 26, 1884), 264 ill., 266. Schuyler here discusses Richardson's design. See also Rev. George DeMille, *History of the Diocese of Albany* (Philadelphia, 1946).

⁵⁶ Reference to the competition of 1889 for the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. from W. 110th to 113th Sts., New York, which resulted in sixty sets of designs. These were reduced to four sets from which the building committee selected the winning design; all of the designs in this final elimination appear in Schuyler's article on the competition (1891–B). Won by (George L.) Heins (1860–1907) & (C. Grant) La Farge (1862–1938), their design represents one of the largest as well as one of the last important Romanesque projects, with the same sort of Gothic interpolation that Richardson employed in All Saints, Albany, and that Schuyler recommends in this essay. Schuyler implies it is too bad that Richardson did not live to enter this competition. Heins & La Farge were designated as the architects for the cathedral in 1891, a situation which continued until Heins's death in 1907, whereupon La Farge continued as sole architect from that date until the completion of the choir in 1911. At this point Cram & Ferguson succeeded to the position of cathedral architects. The first major change in the Heins & La Farge design occurred with the "French Gothic" nave for which ground was broken in 1916. Of the seven ambulatory chapels, Heins & La Farge did two, Henry Vaughan three, Carrère & Hastings one, and Cram & Ferguson, who also did the Baptistry, one. The enormous undertaking remains incomplete.

acclaimed at the time of its opening as "the most monumental interior in this country," should have decided to demolish rather than to restore its most monumental feature, and should have been hopelessly vulgarizing it by substituting for its stone-work a system of iron posts veneered with wood, and of beams enclosing panels of papier-maché, without eliciting any general or effective protest.⁵⁷

The very marked increase of interest in the art of architecture in this country within the last few years has been accompanied by a corresponding advance in the practice of that art, but it has scarcely as yet produced any manifestations that can be called monumental. Our monuments, like those of the Romans, are the works of engineers, and not of architects. In fact, the disproportion in magnitude and in interest between the Roman baths and aqueducts and the Roman temples is exaggerated in the relation between our works of utility and our works of art. Our engineers stand ready to span wider openings and to rear loftier structures than were ever bridged or raised before, provided anybody can be convinced that these unprecedented operations will "pay." The result of their labors, on the æsthetic side, is fairly summed up in the remark of a recent European visitor that public works in America are executed without reference to art.⁵⁸

But, as Bishop Potter pointed out in the admirable letter in which he promulgated the project of an American cathedral,⁵⁹ this very prevalence and predominance of the utilitarian spirit makes it most desirable that there should be a conspicuous counteraction and an impressive reminder, in a great commercial town, that there are other than commercial interests and other than physical needs. A "metropolitan" church, in the modern sense of the adjective, dominating the more prosaic erections of a city, as a cathedral must do if reared upon the noble site secured for the Cathedral of New York, is the conversion into a beacon of Mr. Ruskin's "lamp of sacrifice."⁶⁰ It belongs to its function that it could not by any conceivable possibility "pay," and that it should be, first of all, a religious monument. There is some danger that this may be forgotten, for in the design of ordinary churches, in which the architects who have been working at the problem pre-

⁵⁷ See above, pp. 23 and 174n.

⁵⁸ Reference unlocated.

⁵⁹ Bishop Henry Codman Potter (1835-1908), the bishop under whose aegis St. John the Divine was begun. He opened his appeal for the cathedral in 1887.

⁶⁰ The first of Ruskin's Seven Lamps of Architecture.

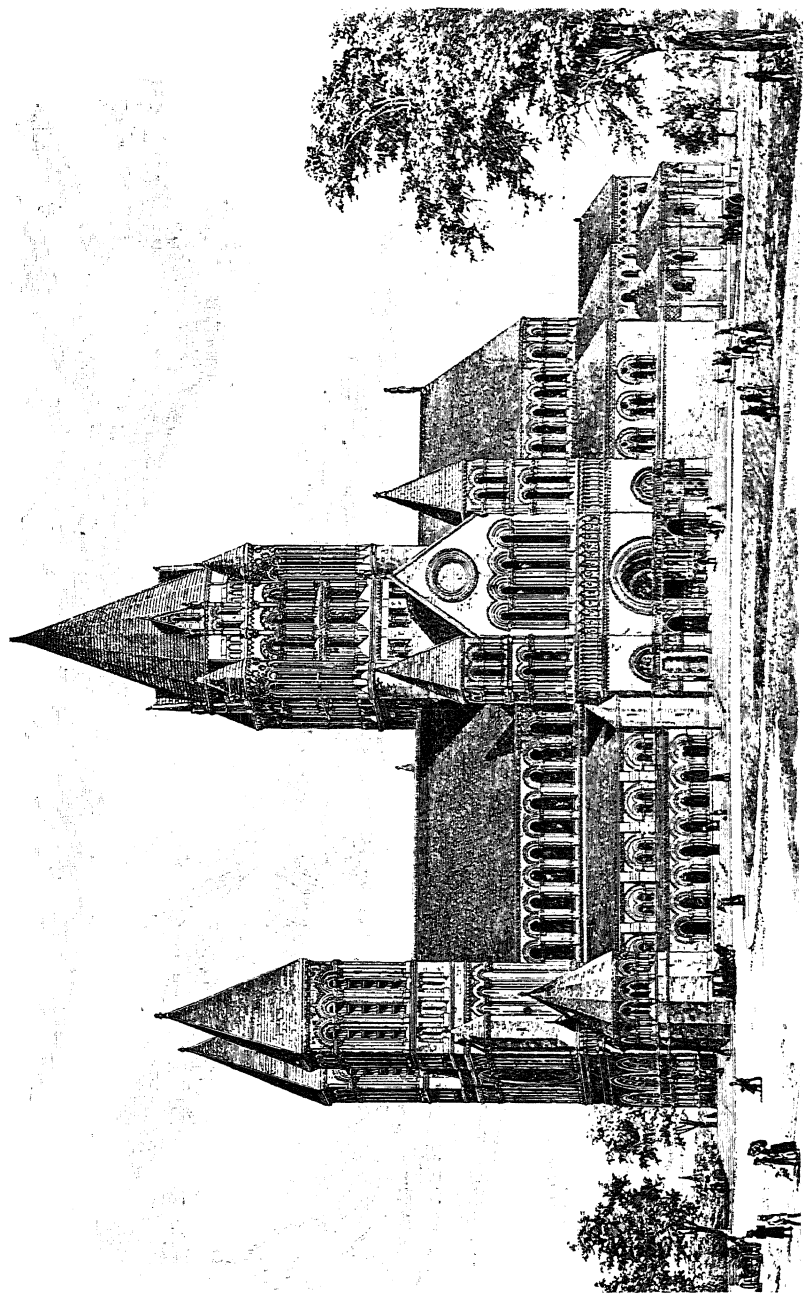


Fig. 39. Henry Hobson Richardson. Competition design for the Protestant Episcopal Cathedral of All Saints, Albany, N. Y., 1882-1883.

sented by the cathedral are commonly exercised, they feel at every turn the pressure of the utilitarian spirit. They are required to "accommodate" a congregation, in most cases at a minimum of cost, so that the preacher may be well seen and heard by all. The muses of acoustics, ventilation, and sanitary plumbing preside over their labors, necessarily to the greater or less detriment of architecture. The features that give dignity to the minsters of the Middle Ages are apt to be obstructive of the comfort of the congregation. If a cathedral were to be merely or mainly a huge auditorium, nearly all the traditions of ecclesiastical architecture would have to be sacrificed. Doubtless, in a true cathedral of such dimensions as those contemplated for the Cathedral of New York, an ample space for preaching must accrue. But a building in which this space is the object of the design can scarcely become a cathedral. Mr. R. L. Stevenson,⁶¹ considering the apse of Noyon, observes: "I could never fathom how any man dares to lift up his voice in a cathedral. What has he to say that will not be an anticlimax? For though I have heard a considerable variety of sermons, I never yet heard one that was so expressive as a cathedral. 'Tis the best preacher itself, and preaches day and night, not only telling you of man's art and aspirations in the past, but convicting your own soul of ardent sympathies." At all events, a cathedral is much more and other than a place to preach in. If that alone were its purpose, it would be best fulfilled by an enclosed and unobstructed space, extending to the limits of the carrying power of the human voice. But such an erection would resemble a mediæval cathedral much less than it would resemble a modern rink.

In truth, the justification of a modern and Protestant cathedral is not to be looked for in its "usefulness." The altar, and not the pulpit, is the centre and culmination of its interior design, as it can scarcely be said to be the centre of "congregational worship." The old cathedrals are most admirably adapted to be the theatres of ecclesiastical processions and pageants; and although the Episcopal Church has a more highly developed ritual than any other Protestant body, it does not provide for these on a cathedral scale. The Church of England cannot be said really to employ the minsters it has inherited. An eminent architect, who was not only an Englishman, but an "Anglo-Catholic," was compelled to describe an ancient cathedral in its modern English

⁶¹ Stevenson, *An Inland Journal*, "Noyon Cathedral."

use as merely "a museum of antiquities, with a free sacred concert on Sunday."⁶² Even among Catholic countries Spain is almost, if not quite, alone in fully using her mediæval cathedrals as modern churches of the people, instead of secluding them as "historical monuments" from the ordinary life of the nation. In a country in which the arts of reading and writing have been acquired by but a small fraction of the people, the saying of Victor Hugo cannot have come true. The book has not destroyed the church, and the invention of printing has not affected either the spirit or the form of devotion. The dramatic and spectacular instinct, so strong among the Southern nations, and among the English-speaking peoples perhaps weaker than anywhere else, has found natural vent, in a country in which the type of religion has remained mediæval, in those gorgeous ceremonials, addressed to the imagination and not to the intellect, which really require and employ the stage and the scenery of a mediæval cathedral. Not York or Salisbury, not Cologne or Strasburg, not Rheims or Amiens, hardly Milan or St. Peter's itself, so fully shows to our generation the popular need which the mediæval minsters were meant to answer as it is shown to travellers on one of the great feasts of the Church in Toledo or Seville. The tardy completion of Cologne under the auspices of a Protestant emperor, and by the contributions of Protestant Germany, not as any longer the temple of the national faith, but as an architectural monument of which the German people have reason to be proud, and the completion of which is a monument also of the union of Germany, more fitly represents the modern attitude of mind respecting cathedrals.⁶³

An American Protestant church nearly as long as Cologne (and such is the dimension proposed for the Cathedral of New York) is obviously far beyond the limits of a convenient auditorium, and beyond the ritual requirements of the Episcopal Church. In such a structure the space occupied by the largest congregation that can be assembled within the sound of a single voice is but a fragment, and such a congregation itself but an incident, to be recognized and provided for, indeed, but by no means to be allowed to become the chief object of design. But the aim of these remarks has been to show that it is by its success as an architectural monument that the cathedral must be

⁶² A. E. Street, *Memoirs of George Edmund Street*, p. 64.

⁶³ The immensely long building period for the Cologne Cathedral concluded only in 1880.

justified, if it is to be justified at all. In this point of view the very excess, which in any utilitarian point of view is wasteful, becomes an element of impressiveness as being an emphatic rejection in a building erected to the glory of God, of "the nicely calculated less or more"⁶⁴ that is suitable and inevitable to buildings erected primarily for the use of man.

II

Mr. Richardson's design for the Cathedral of All-Saints at Albany is herewith so fully illustrated as to enable the architect to estimate the effect the interior would have had in execution, and the untrained reader to form an impression of the exterior effect, which, however incomplete, can scarcely be misleading. The design is, perhaps, the most suggestive contribution that has thus far been made to the solution of the architectural problem of a modern cathedral which the diocese of New York has undertaken. At all events, the influence of it was more easy to be traced in the designs for that work than the influence of any building actually erected on this side of the ocean. In part this was due to the merits of the design itself; in part to the immense vigor and large picturesqueness of the executed works of its author—qualities that have so impressed themselves upon the younger generation of American architects that there is scarcely a contemporary work of importance that does not betray his influence, and that the Provençal Romanesque, in which his personal power of design was manifested, may already be said almost to have become the style of the country. It must be manifest, however, that it would be an injustice to Mr. Richardson's memory to take his design for the Albany Cathedral as his contribution to the civic—one may almost say the national—problem of the present. For this design was prepared under rigid limitations of space and of cost; and though its rejection is said to have been due to its excess of these latter, it is by no means what its author would have devised for a project in which there is no limitation. The Cathedral of All-Saints was to be rather a parish church of unusual dimensions than a cathedral; and the dimensions were still so restricted, and "seating capacity" still so important, that the accommodation of the congregation became a main object rather than an incident of the plan from which the structure proceeds.

⁶⁴ Wordsworth, *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*, part 3, "Inside of Kings College Chapel."

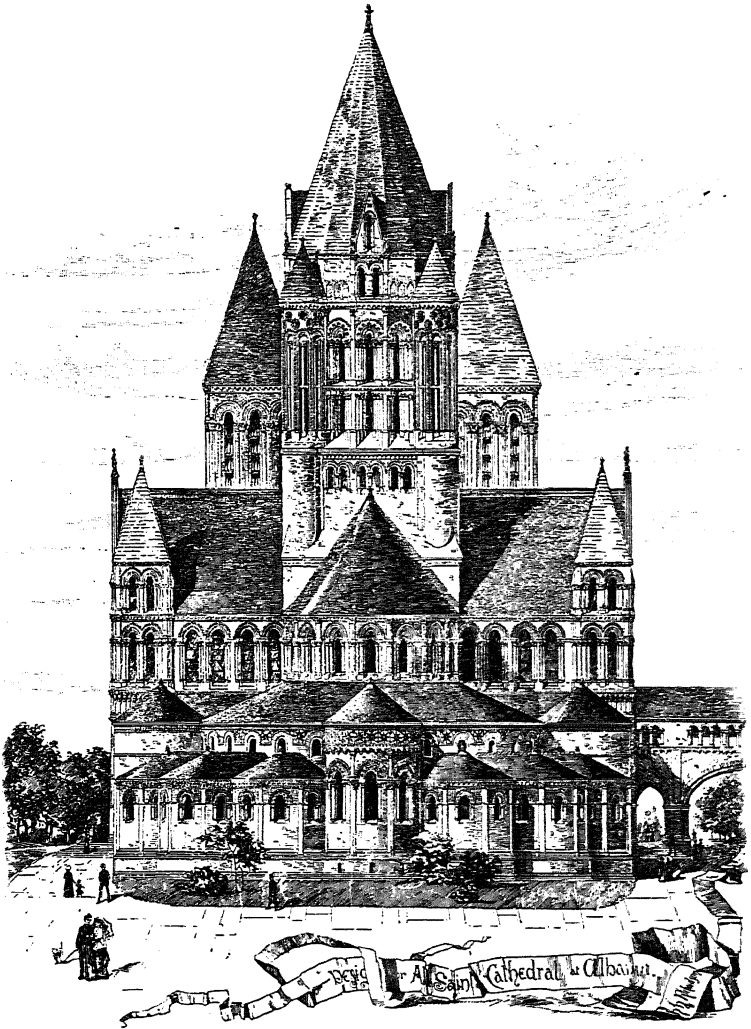


Fig. 40. Apse, All Saints.

Without reference to its scale, the design for the Cathedral of Albany confesses the limitations that have been relaxed for the Cathedral of New York, and that render it unavailable as a direct model. These appear mainly in the interior, but, as we shall presently see, they affect the exterior design as well. As it was in the beginnings of the art of building, so now stone remains the material of monumental struc-

tures. In durability it is rivalled, if it be rivalled, by metal alone, and such experiments as the flèche of Rouen and the tower of Paris have not yet convinced mankind of the possibility of a monumental metallic architecture.⁶⁵ Timber remains the most acceptable substitute, but timber in a cathedral is plainly a substitute, and monumental architecture admits no substitutes in the structure of a great building. A stone ceiling must be regarded as an indispensable requisite of a true cathedral; and although very impressive and noble cathedrals still exhibit wooden ceilings, they so far come short of fulfilling the idea of a cathedral, and the antiquarians are pretty well agreed that the purpose of the builders was to make their ceilings as durable as their walls, and that they failed to carry out their purpose either through lack of means or through doubt of their own ability to construct stone ceilings. Considering the elaborate expositions of construction in the true timber roofs of the English Gothic, the boarded ceilings of Ely and Peterborough were plainly makeshifts, and equally a makeshift would be the wooden ceiling, of trefoil section, hung to the timbers of the roof and concealing its construction, which Mr. Richardson designed for the Albany Cathedral.

We come here, rather unexpectedly, upon the question of "style." If a vaulted ceiling be so eminently desirable in a purely monumental building as to amount to an architectural necessity, it is equally clear that the groined vault—that is to say, the vault formed by the intersection of two or more vaults—is necessary to the complete development of the vaulting system; and for this the Romance architecture in which Mr. Richardson preferred to work, and which in a general way may be called the style of his design for Albany, does not provide.* The churches of the Provençal Romanesque were vaulted, but with a continuous tunnel vault, supported equally at all points, and demanding an enormous thickness of wall, pierced by few and small openings, to withstand the lateral thrust of the arch. The introduction of groined vaults involved a concentration of the supports and of the counter-

* The alternative of a domical construction is not here considered, though it was adopted in that one of the designs for the Cathedral of New York that was chosen for further development. The competitive design could not be accepted as a solution of the problem, since the domed interior was masked, instead of being expressed, by the exterior. [Schuyler's note.]

⁶⁵ Both are nineteenth-century. The thirteenth-century flèche of Notre Dame, destroyed in 1792, was rebuilt in metal following the original design by Viollet-le-Duc in 1859-1860. The flèche at Rouen was struck by lightning in 1822 and rebuilt in cast iron 1827-1877.

forts—that is to say, a series of buttresses in place of a continuous wall. The piers of the nave and the exterior buttresses, connected by flying buttresses with the vaults the thrust of which they withstood, thus constituted the framework of the building, and the wall between the buttresses became a mere screen, as finally it did become an avowed screen of painted glass. The history of this development of the vault is the history of the transition from Romanesque to Gothic architecture. The mediæval architects carried this development to its extreme, leaving at last, as in the *Sainte Chapelle*, no wall at all, and their work has been described as an attempt to “etherealize matter.”⁶⁶ It may very well be doubted whether the architect of a modern cathedral should not stop short of the result they reached, and strive for a simpler and more robust treatment than theirs—in other words, for a treatment more Romanesque. But if we assume that the cathedral shall be ceiled in material as durable and monumental as that of its walls, we cannot reject the labors of the generations of artistic builders who concerned themselves with that problem, and attained so brilliant a solution of it. To take the instance before us, the clerestory of the nave and of the choir is in effect a continuous arcade of narrow-pointed lancets [Fig. 39]. It needs a second glance to note that they are grouped in pairs, and that the piers between the pairs are slightly broader than the piers dividing the openings of each pair. The slight increase in mass quite suffices to account in the interior for the principal roof timber which rests upon it, and, with the vaulting-shaft, to continue upward the line of the nave-pier. But if the flying buttress, necessary to transfer the thrust of the vault, were built at this point, the arcade of the exterior would be effectually interrupted, and the space between the buttresses set off into a single bay, as in the wall of the aisle below, which does, in fact, represent a vault. In that case a single large opening would naturally take the place of the pair of lancets, still further emphasizing the division into bays, and the side of the nave would at once bear a much stronger resemblance than it now bears to the accepted type of a cathedral. In the choir a like result would follow, and it would be emphasized at the east end. The circle of apsidal chapels is one of the most striking and most successful features of Mr. Richardson’s design [Fig. 40]. As will be seen from the

⁶⁶ *Sainte-Chapelle* (consecrated 1248).

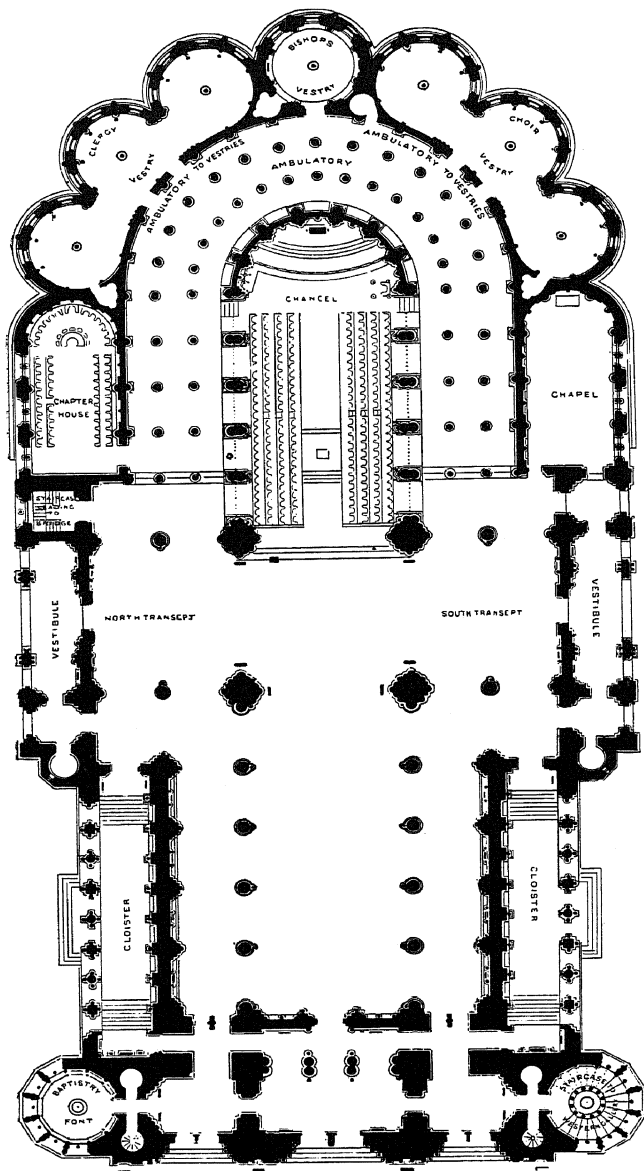


Fig. 41. Plan, All Saints.

ground-plan, however, these are features that do not proceed from the interior arrangement so much as features to which the interior arrangement is conformed [Fig. 41]. Even when viewed from the outside the undeniable power and picturesqueness of the group is marred by the suggestion of something forced and arbitrary in their arrangement. There are precedents in Romanesque architecture for such a disposition, among them "the great triapsal swing" of the twelfth-century churches of Cologne, though evidently the example that inspired Mr. Richardson was the chevet of Clermont in Auvergne,⁶⁷ which he has followed even to the introduction of the mosaic above the springing of the arches. All these, however, are much simpler than the apse designed for Albany. What Mr. Richardson doubtless had in mind was to reproduce the effect of the ring of chapels that forms the chevet of a French Gothic cathedral, without reproducing Gothic forms. But the flying buttresses that radiate from the apse of a French Gothic cathedral determine and bound the chapels that fill the spaces between them, and, by making these appear integral parts of the main structure, save them from the look they would otherwise have of extraneous appendages.

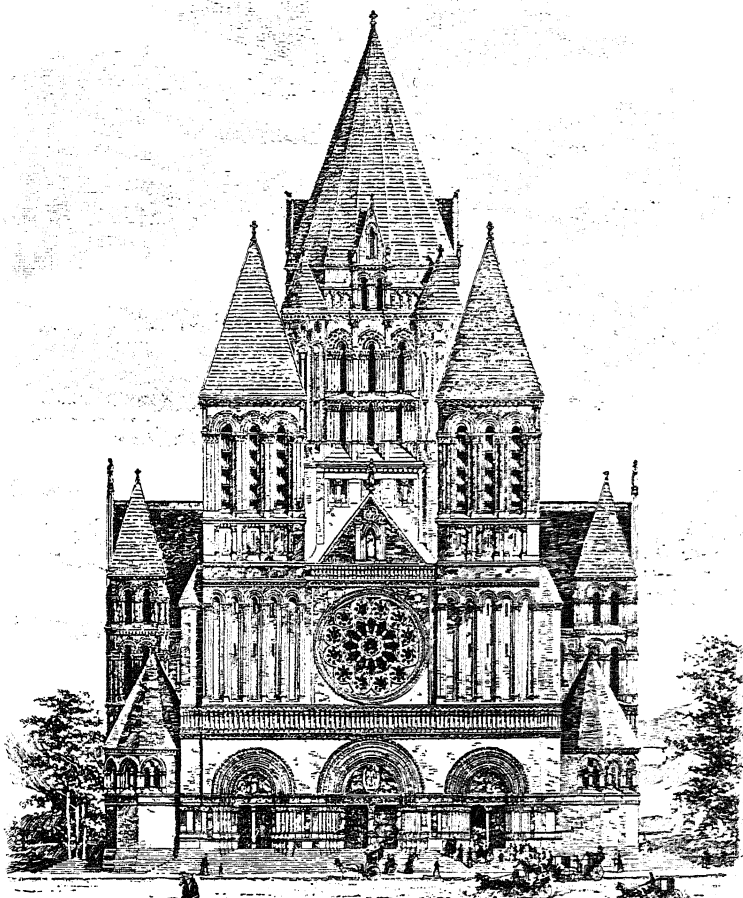
III

It seems, then, that the question of style in a modern cathedral is not to be determined according to the individual preference of a designer for round arches or pointed, for openings traceried or plain. If the problem he is working at has been successfully solved heretofore, he is not at liberty to ignore this solution because it falls without the limits of the historical period he has proposed to himself, and to content himself with an incomplete solution. Of course this remark does not apply as a criticism to Mr. Richardson's design for Albany, prepared under limitations that he was compelled to observe, but which the competitors for the Cathedral of New York were at liberty to disregard. Whether he was right in so far sacrificing the monumental character of his interior to the monumental features of his exterior, is not a practical question for designers of whom no sacrifice in either direction is demanded. There are very noble examples of vaulted architecture in the Romanesque period—examples which it will

⁶⁷ Notre Dame du Port, Clermont-Ferrand (eleventh and twelfth centuries).

be glory enough for the architect of the Cathedral of New York if he succeeds in equalling without slavishly imitating. But in all these there is a lack of that complete correspondence between the interior and the exterior structure that makes the organic unity of a true cathedral, and that was attained for the first time in the thirteenth century, after a series of tentative experiments embodied in these very Romanesque buildings.* It is by no means necessary for an architect to revert to these experiments because he does not sympathize with the expression of strained intensity and "otherworldliness" which the Gothic architects attained, and prefers the more robust, more massive, more mundane aspect of the Romanesque monuments that preceded the great cathedrals. The modelling of these cathedrals is carried so far that nothing is left unmodelled; there are no longer any surfaces; the whole structure is anatomized; and the modern architect, even while he stands astonished at the result of this unsparing analysis, may yet say, "It were to consider too curiously to consider so." But it is not by refusing the aid these wonderful structures offer him that he can advance upon or equal them. The development of a cathedral requires, indeed, a system of piers and vaults and flying arches and weighted buttresses. But these need not be the same features in modelling, in detail, or in expression that we know in historical examples. Instances are not wanting to show that they may be massed with the stalwart simplicity of the Romanesque builders as well as drawn into the complex and bewildering forms they assumed in the later Gothic. In his design for Albany, Mr. Richardson has shown very clearly that an artist, whose individuality is strong enough, can put its stamp upon whatever he adopts. The common distinction that Romanesque is a round-arched and Gothic a pointed style, is shown to be baseless in an unmistakably Romanesque church in which all the openings of the clerestory are pointed lancets, in which the pointed openings elsewhere far outnumber the round arches, and in which the architect has introduced tracery, sparingly but effectively, without at all marring the unity of the structure. Nay, the church owes the suggestion of some of its noblest features to works that did not exist until the period classified as Romanesque had closed. A modern architect forfeits his birthright who does not use all that the past has to offer him of

* See Mr. Charles Herbert Moore's excellent "Development and Character of Gothic Architecture," published since this paper was written; a work which no student of Gothic or of cathedral-building can afford not to read. [Schuyler's note.]



Design for
All Saints' Cathedral
Albany.
W. H. Richardson.

Fig. 42. Front elevation, All Saints.

help; and his originality is impeached only if he does not overrule to his own purposes what he adopts, if he copies instead of using. The west front of Albany, for example, is the west front of Notre Dame of Paris,⁶⁸ with differences, as marked as the resemblances, which convert it into a new creation [Fig. 42]. The three entrances, bur-

⁶⁸ West front, Notre Dame, Paris (1190-1250). North porch, Chartres (first half of thirteenth century).

rowed through the thickness of the wall and not projected from the face, are repeated, but with a strong and decorated belt course at their springing. The buttresses, bringing down the line of the towers at Paris and dividing the front into three, are omitted, and a balustrade in relief takes the place of the line of statues. The flanking towers thus rise from a continuous base, and a tall mock-arcade marks their lines in the next stage and emphasizes the flanking wall, which in the mediæval example is pierced with a double arch on each side of the rose-window, and the central wall is here recessed to serve the same purpose of detaching the towers which in Notre Dame is answered by the buttresses, while above the rose-window another balustrade corresponds to the tall traceried arcade, and the lancets of the belfry stage, double in Notre Dame, are here grouped in threes. Except the buttresses, every feature of the old front has its counterpart, but by the emphasis given to the horizontal lines, and the diminution of the vertical lines, in one instance amounting to an effacement, the whole aspect of the façade is transformed. This is an admirable example of the manner in which a modern architect may employ his inheritance. Another, not less admirable, is the adoption in the transept entrance of the main and most characteristic feature of the famous "triple northern porch" of Chartres, the interpolation of narrow arches between the main portals and below the springing of their arches. This is a still more signal instance of what we have been saying of the power of changing the expression of a feature while retaining its substance, for the northern porch of Chartres is one of the loveliest fantasies of a late and highly ornate Gothic, and it is here translated back into the severer Romanesque, as all the structural features of a fully developed cathedral might be.

IV

But it is not in its details nor in its features, fine as many of these are, that Mr. Richardson's design for Albany offers the most inspiring suggestions and the safest model. It is in the sense that pervades it of the all-importance of the relation of its masses, and in the mastery it shows of architectural composition. It was long ago noted as a mark of an artistic work of architecture that it "pyramidizes,"⁶⁹ and this implies

⁶⁹ Thomas Hope, *An Historical Essay on Architecture* (London, 1835), makes frequent use of "pyramidize." Schuyler admits that he borrowed this coinage from Hope; see below, p. 493.

a single culminating feature to which the parts converge and rise. In the work which first fixed Mr. Richardson's rank among American architects—Trinity Church in Boston⁷⁰—the most striking merit of the design is the manner in which the parts are subordinated to the noble and massive central tower. In his design for Albany the same subordination is carried through more gradations, and it is both more subtle and more successful. The outer aisles of the nave are secluded altogether from the interior, and set off in the "cloisters" or loggie that are among the most effective features of the building, and among the happiest suggestions its designer derived from the study of Spanish architecture. The roofs of these recede to the walls of the aisle proper, the roofs of which are conspicuous, so that the clerestory is seen above a succession of terraces. At the east end the circle of chapels and the aisle roofs and the sharp slope of the main roof rise in receding masses that converge towards the great central tower, which from the side broadens down upon the flanking towers of the transept. The relation between the western and the central towers is far happier than in the earlier example, and the central tower itself shows as great an advance upon the tower of Trinity as does that upon the tower of Salamanca, from which the suggestion of it was derived. But the western front is perhaps the most brilliantly successful illustration of its author's power. We have seen that Mr. Richardson refused the aid of the buttresses, which with their successive offsets narrow the fronts of Gothic cathedrals as they rise, but he replaced them with a series of devices that answer the same purpose almost as effectively. The flanking towers are themselves flanked at the base by low polygonal hooded structures that are succeeded by attached turrets reaching to the belfry stage. The roofs of the western towers themselves next converge towards the looming bulk of the central feature, to which they serve as pinnacles. Surely in all the achievements of architectural amity through variety that the Middle Ages have bequeathed to us, there are few that in nobleness and dignity surpass the effect that is promised by Mr. Richardson's design for the west front of Albany, and in modern work where shall we look for a parallel.

This very central tower may serve as a reminder of the point in which a modern cathedral may mark an architectural advance upon

⁷⁰ See above, p. 202n. On the dependence of Richardson's tower on that of Salamanca, mentioned below, see above, p. 198n.

the mediæval art which, in most respects, its builders may be well content if they can equal. For the culminating feature of the exterior should be the culminating feature of the interior also, and it was this need that the mediæval architects left unanswered. They recognized it, and in the cimborio of the Spanish cathedral, and in such experiments as the octagon of Ely, they made the beginnings of an answer, but these are no more to be accepted as complete than the Romanesque system of vaulting, which the Gothic architects developed to its perfection. The *flèche* of a French cathedral emphasizes rather than supplies the need of such a culmination. The central towers of such English cathedrals as possess them are purely exterior ornaments, as unrelated to the body of the church as its western towers. In Mr. Richardson's design the tall and narrow dome at the crossing would not be apprehensible as a crowning feature, except from a point of view almost directly beneath it, while its external form does not intimate its interior function [Fig. 43]. It was a true feeling that led the architects of the Italian Renaissance to embrace the aisles as well as the nave under the central dome, though they clothed their construction in untrue forms. To develop true forms for it is the one advance upon past ecclesiastical architecture which seems to be possible, and to develop these may be said to be the central problem of design in an American cathedral.

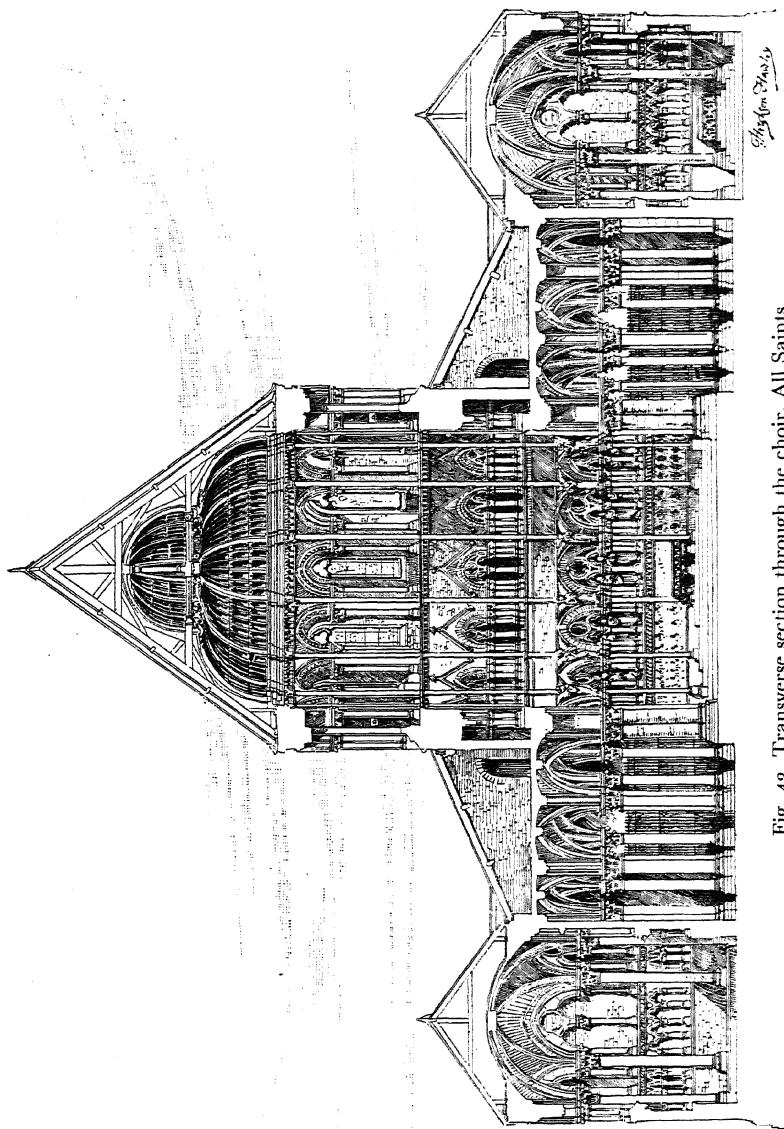


Fig. 43. Transverse section through the choir, All Saints.

Glimpses of Western Architecture: Chicago⁷¹

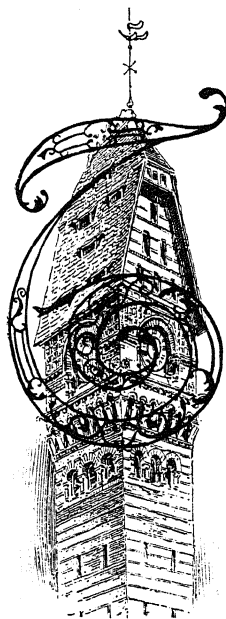


Fig. 44. Cyrus L. W. Eidlitz. Clock tower, Dearborn Station, Chicago, 1883.

O begin with a paradox, the feature of Chicago is its featurelessness. There is scarcely any capital, ancient or modern, to which the site supplies so little of a visible reason of being. The prairie and the lake meet at a level, a liquid plain and a plain of mud that cannot properly be called solid, with nothing but the change of material to break the expanse. Indeed, when there is a breeze, the surface of Lake Michigan would be distinctly more diversified than that of the adjoining land, but for the handiwork of man. In point of fact, Chicago is of course explained by the confluence here of the two branches of the Chicago River. These have determined the site, the plan, and the building of the town, but one can scarcely describe as natural features the two sinuous ditches that drain the prairie into the lake, apparently in defiance of the law that water runs, and even oozes, down hill. Streams, however narrow and sluggish they may be, so they be themselves available for traffic, operate an obstruction to traffic by land; and it is the fact that for some distance from the junction the

⁷¹ *Harper's Magazine*, 83 (Aug. 1891), 395-406; (Sept. 1891), 554-570. Reprinted in *American Architecture*, pp. 112-167. Reproduced in full with all the original line cuts. For ill. and further discussion of Chicago buildings, see Carl Condit, *The Rise of the Skyscraper* (Chicago, 1952); Frank A. Randall, *History of the Development of Building Construction in Chicago* (Urbana, Ill., 1949); Thomas E. Tallmadge, *Architecture in Old Chicago* (Chicago, 1941); John Drury, *Old Chicago Houses* (Chicago, 1941).

south fork of the river flows parallel with the shore of the lake, and within a half-mile of it, which establishes in this enclosure the commercial centre of Chicago. Even the slight obstacle interposed to traffic by the confluent streams, bridged and tunnelled as they are, has sufficed greatly to raise the cost of land within this area, in comparison with that outside, and to compel here the erection of the towering structures that are the most characteristic and the most impressive monuments of the town.

In character and impressiveness these by no means disappoint the stranger's expectations, but in number and extent they do, rather. For what one expects of Chicago, before anything else, is modernness. In most things one's expectations are fully realized. It is the most contemporaneous of capitals, and in the appearance of its people and their talk in the streets and in the clubs and in the newspapers it fairly palpitates with "actuality." Nevertheless, the general aspect of the business quarter is distinctly old-fashioned, and this even to the effete Oriental from New York or Boston. The elevator is nearly a quarter of a century old, and the first specimens of "elevator architecture," the Western Union and the "Tribune" Buildings in New York, are very nearly coeval with the great fire in Chicago.⁷² One would have supposed that the rebuilders of Chicago would have seized upon this hint with avidity, and that its compressed commercial quarter would have made up in altitude what it lacked in area. In fact, not only are the great modern office buildings still exceptional in the most costly and most crowded district, but it is astonishing to hear that the oldest of them is scarcely more than seven years of age. "Men's deeds are after as they have been accustomed"⁷³—and the first impulse of the burnt-out merchants of Chicago was not to seize the opportunity the clean sweep of the fire had given them to improve their warehouses and office buildings, but to provide themselves straightway with places in which they could find shelter and do business. The consequence was that the new buildings of the burnt district were planned and designed, as well as built, with the utmost possible speed, and the rebuilding was for the most part done by the same architects who had built the old Chicago, and who took even less thought the second time than they had taken the first, by reason of the greater pressure upon them.

⁷² See above, p. 63, and below, pp. 424f.

⁷³ Reference unlocated.

The American commercial Renaissance, commonly expressed in cast-iron, was in its full efflorescence just before the fire. The material was discredited by that calamity,⁷⁴ but unhappily not the forms it had taken, and in Chicago we may see, what is scarcely to be seen anywhere else in the world, fronts in cast-iron, themselves imitated from lithic architecture, again imitated in masonry, with the modifications reproduced that had been made necessary by the use of the less trustworthy material. This ignoble process is facilitated by the material at hand, a limestone of which slabs can be had in sizes that simulate exactly the castings from which the treatment of them is derived. After the exposure of a few months to the bituminous fumes it is really impossible to tell one of these reproductions from the original, which very likely adjoins it. Masonry and metal alike appear to have come from a foundry, rather than from a quarry, and to have been moulded according to the stock patterns of some architectural iron-works. The lifelessness and thoughtlessness of the iron-founders' work predominate in the streets devoted to the retail trade, and the picturesque tourist in Chicago is thus compelled to traverse many miles of street fronts quite as dismal and as monotonous as the commercial architecture of any other modern town.

There is a compensation for this in what at first sight seems to be one of its aggravations. The buildings which wear these stereotyped street fronts are much lower and less capacious than the increasing exigencies of business require, and than the introduction of the elevator makes possible, and they could not be other than cheap and flimsy in construction. Naturally the rebuilders of Chicago talked a great deal about "absolutely fire-proof" construction, but as naturally they did very little of it. The necessity for immediate accommodation, at a minimum of cost, was overwhelming, and cheap and hasty construction cannot be fire-proof construction. Accordingly, the majority of the commercial buildings now standing in Chicago are as really provisional and temporary as the tents and shanties, pitched almost on

⁷⁴ Cast-iron fronts were especially popular in the sixties; see, for example, Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture*, 3rd ed., pp. 188-204, and Turpin C. Bannister, "Bogardus Revisited," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 15 (Dec. 1956), 12-22. The downtown conflagrations in Chicago (1871) and Boston (1872) supposedly discredited an allegedly "fireproof" material which unfortunately became ductile at very high temperatures. Since cast-iron buildings had collapsed in earlier fires, however, it would seem that the customary explanation for the lack of popularity of the material in the seventies must be somewhat complicated by other considerations.

the embers of the fire, which they succeeded. The time being now ripe for replacing them by structures more capacious and durable, it is a matter for congratulation that there is nothing in the existing buildings of such practical or architectural value as to make anybody regret or obstruct the substitution.

Even if the old-fashioned architects who rebuilt Chicago had been anxious to reconstruct it according to the best and newest lights, it would have been quite out of their power to do so unaided. The erection of a twelve-story building anywhere involves an amount of mechanical consideration and a degree of engineering skill that are quite beyond the practitioners of the American metallic Renaissance. In Chicago the problem is more complicated than elsewhere, because these towering and massive structures ultimately rest upon a quagmire that is not less but more untrustworthy the deeper one digs.⁷⁵ The distribution of the weight by carrying the foundations down to a trustworthy bottom, and increasing the area of the supporting piers as they descend, is not practicable here, nor, for the same reason, can it be done by piling. It is managed, in the heaviest buildings, by floating them upon a raft of concrete and railroad iron, spread a few feet below the surface, so that there are no cellars in the business quarter, and the subterranean activities that are so striking in the elevator buildings of New York are quite unknown. If the architects of the old Chicago, to whom their former clients naturally applied to rear the phoenix of the new, had been seized with the ambition of building Babels, they would doubtless have made as wild work practically as they certainly would have made artistically in the confusion of architectural tongues that would have fallen upon them. It is in every point of view fortunate that the modernization of the town was reserved for the better-trained designers of a younger generation.

It might be expected that the architecture of Chicago would be severely utilitarian in purpose if not in design, and this is the case. The city may be said to consist of places of business and places of residence. There are no churches, for example, that fairly represent the skill of the architects. The best of them are scarcely worthy of illustration or discussion here, while the worst of them might suitably illustrate

⁷⁵ On the pioneering role which Chicago played in foundation design to counteract the ooze on which the city is built, see Ralph B. Peck, "History of Building Foundations in Chicago," *University of Illinois Bulletin*, No. 45 (Jan. 2, 1948), 64 pp.

the work projected by a ribald wit on "The Comic Aspects of Christianity." Among other things, it follows from this deficiency that Chicago lacks almost altogether, in any general view that can be had of it, the variety and animation that are imparted to the sky-line of a town seen from the water, or from an eminence, by a "tiara of proud towers," even when these are not specially attractive in outline or in detail, nor especially fortunate in their grouping. There is nothing, for example, in the aspect of Chicago from the lake, or from any attainable point of view, that is comparable to the sky-line of the Back Bay of Boston, as seen from the Cambridge bridge, or of lower New York from either river. The towering buildings are almost wholly flat-roofed, and their stark, rectangular outlines cannot take on picturesqueness, even under the friendly drapery of the smoke that overhangs the commercial quarter during six days of the week. The architect of the Dearborn Station was very happily inspired when he relieved the prevailing monotony with the quaint and striking clock-tower that adjoins that structure⁷⁶ [Fig. 44].

The secular public buildings of Chicago are much more noteworthy than the churches, but upon the whole they bear scarcely so large a relation to the mass of private building as one would expect from the wealth and the public spirit of the town, and with one or two very noteworthy exceptions, recent as many of them are, they were built too early. The most discussed of them is the City and County Building,⁷⁷ and this has been discussed for reasons quite alien to its architecture, the halves of what was originally a single design having been assigned to different architects [Fig. 45]. The original design has been followed in the main, and the result is an edifice that certainly makes a distinctive impression. A building, completely detached, 340 feet by 280 in area, and considerably over 100 feet high, can scarcely fail to make an impression by dint of mere magnitude, but there is rather more than that in the City and County Building. The parts are few and large, but five stories appearing, the masonry is massive, and the pro-

⁷⁶ Dearborn Station, W. Polk at the foot of S. Dearborn Sts., (built 1883; extant) by Cyrus L. W. Eidlitz. The Romanesque structure contains a tall clock tower modeled on Flemish prototypes. Schuyler discusses this building in his article on Eidlitz (1896-B, p. 414).

⁷⁷ Combined City Hall and County Building, block bounded by N. LaSalle, W. Randolph, N. Clark, and W. Washington Sts. (city section completed 1882; county section 1885; demolished 1906-1908); for the city, John M. Van Osdel (1811-1891); for the county, James J. Egan (1839-1914) and Alex Kirkland.

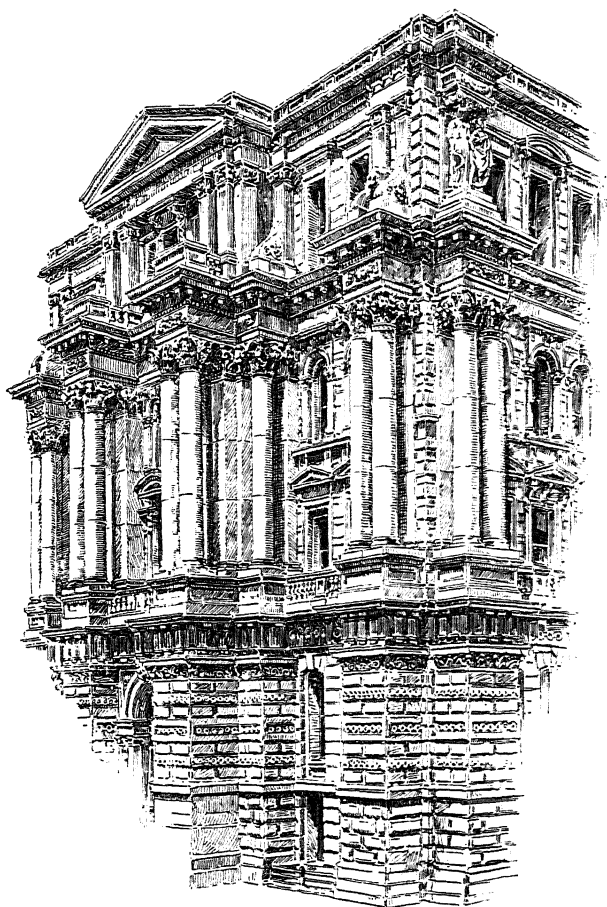


Fig. 45. John M. Van Osdel/J. J. Egan and Alex Kirkland. Combined City and County Building, Chicago, completed 1885 and 1882 respectively.

jecting and pedimented porticoes are on an ample scale. These things give the building a certain effect of sumptuosity and swagger that ally it rather to the Parisian than to the Peorian Renaissance. The effect is marred by certain drawbacks of detail, and by one that is scarcely of detail, the extreme meanness and baldness of the attic, in which, for the only time in the building, the openings seem to be arranged with some references to their uses, and in which accordingly they have a painfully pinched and huddled appearance. In the decora-

tive detail there is apparent a divergency of views between the two architects appointed to carry out the divided halves of the united design. The municipal designer—or possibly it is the county gentleman—has been content to stand upon the ancient ways, and to introduce no detail for which he has not found Ludovican precedent, while his rival is of a more aspiring mind, and has endeavored to carry out the precepts of the late Thomas Jefferson, by classicizing things modern.⁷⁸ His excursions are not very daring, and consist mainly in such substitutions as that of an Indian's head for the antique mask, in a frieze of conventionalized American foliage. He has attained what must be in such an attempt the gratifying success of converting his modern material to a result as dull and lifeless and uninteresting as his prototype. It does not, however, impair the grandiosity of the general effect. This is impaired, not merely by the poverty of design already noted in the attic, but also by the niggardliness shown in dividing the polished granite column of the porticoes into several drums, though monoliths are plainly indicated by their dimensions, and by the general scale of the masonry. The small economy is the more injurious, because a noble regardlessness of expense is of the essence of the architecture, and an integral part of its effectiveness. The most monumental feature of the projected building has never been supplied—a huge arch in the centre of each of the shorter fronts, giving access to the central court, and marking the division between the property of the city and of the county. It is possible that the failure to finish this arch has proceeded from the political conflict that has left its scars upon the building elsewhere. There is an obvious practical difficulty in intrusting the two halves of an arch to rival architects and rival contractors. However that may be, the arch is unbuilt, and the entrance to the central court is a mere rift in the wall. The practical townspeople have seized the opportunity thus presented by the unoccupied space of free quarters for the all-pervading buggy. With a contempt for the constituted authorities that it must be owned the constituted authorities have gone far to justify, they tether their horses in the shadow of their chief civic monument, like so many Arabs under the pillars of Palmyra or

⁷⁸ "Ludovican" here means that the building partakes of the Louis styles, and specifically alludes to the reference below, p. 253n. The reference to Jefferson presumably alludes to his interest in using modern motifs in order to modernize classic prototypes, although Benjamin Latrobe created the best known examples of such modernization in his "corn" and "tobacco" capitals for the Senate Rotunda of the United States Capitol.

Persepolis, and heighten the impression of being the relic of an extinct race that is given to the pile not only by its unfinished state and by the stains of smoke, undistinguishable from those of time, but by its entirely exotic architecture. As the newly-landed Irishman, making his way up Broadway from Castle Garden, is said to have exclaimed, when he came in sight of the City Hall, that "that never was built in this country,"⁷⁹ so the stranger in Chicago is tempted to declare of its municipal building that it could not have been reared by the same race of whose building activities the other evidences surround him. This single example of Ludovician architecture recalls, as most examples of it do, Thackeray's caricature of its Mecænas.⁸⁰ Despoiled of its periwigs and its high heels, that is to say, of its architecture, which is easily separable from it, the building would merely lose all its character, without losing anything that belongs to it as a building.

Nevertheless this municipal building has its character, and in comparison with the next most famous public building of Chicago, it vindicates the wisdom of its architect in subjecting himself to the safeguard of a style of which, moreover, his work shows a real study. The style may be absolutely irrelevant both to our needs and to our ideas, as irrelevant as the political system of Louis XIV which it recalls. Its formulas may seem quite empty, but they gather dignity, if not meaning, when contrasted with the work of an avid "swallower of formulas," like the architect of the Board of Trade.⁸¹ His work is of no style, a proposition that is not invalidated by the probability that he himself would call it "American eclectic Gothic." We all know what the untutored and aboriginal architect stretches that term to cover. There is no doubt about its being characteristically modern and American; one might say characteristically Western, if he did not recall

⁷⁹ An ironical reference to the contrast between the chaste eighteenth-century classicism of the New York City Hall (1802-1812) and surrounding commercial buildings with a similar contrast between the "Ludovician" City and County Building and its architectural environment. Schuyler wrote an article on the New York City Hall (1908-B) to demonstrate that Joseph F. Mangin (fl. 1794-1818) and not John McComb (1763-1853), as had been popularly supposed, was the real designer of this building on which both worked.

⁸⁰ The reference is to Thackeray's famous three-part caricature of Louis XIV in the *Paris Sketch Book*. A regal costume and towering wig on a dummy labeled "Rex" appears on the left side of the drawing; in the middle, a short, paunchy, bald-headed man labeled "Ludovicus"; finally, on the right, costume and man come together for "Rex Ludovicus."

⁸¹ Board of Trade Building, 141 W. Jackson St. (1882-1883; demolished 1929) by William W. Boyington (1818-1898). This was the third building for the Board of Trade, replaced by the present quarters on the same site in 1930.



Fig. 46. Romanesque Chicago: Michigan Ave. from Congress St. to Van Buren St. Left to right: Adler & Sullivan, Auditorium, 1887-1889; S. S. Beman, Studebaker Building, 1884-1886; a skeletal interloper; Burnham & Root, Art Institute, 1886-1887.

equally free and untrammelled exuberances in the Atlantic States. But it is impossible to ascribe to it any architectural merit, unless a complete disregard for precedent is to be imputed for righteousness, whether it proceed from ignorance or from contempt. And, indeed, there are not many other structures in the United States, of equal cost and pretension, which equally with this combine the dignity of a commercial traveller with the bland repose of St. Vitus. It is difficult to contemplate its bustling and uneasy façade without feeling a certain sympathy with the mob of anarchists that “demonstrated” under its windows on the night of its opening. If they were really anarchists, it was very ungrateful of them, for one would go far to find a more perfect expression of anarchy in architecture, and it is conceivable that they were instigated by an outraged architectural critic in disguise. If that ringleader had been caught and arraigned, he could have maintained, with much better reason, the plea that Gustave Courbet made for his share in the destruction of the column of the Place Vendôme, that his opposition to the monument was not political, but æsthetic.⁸²

⁸² Gustave Courbet (1819-1877), French painter and leader of the realist movement. Courbet participated in the Paris Commune of 1871 when he and other anti-monarchists toppled the Vendôme Column. Once the Commune had been toppled in turn, Courbet received a six-months’ jail sentence.

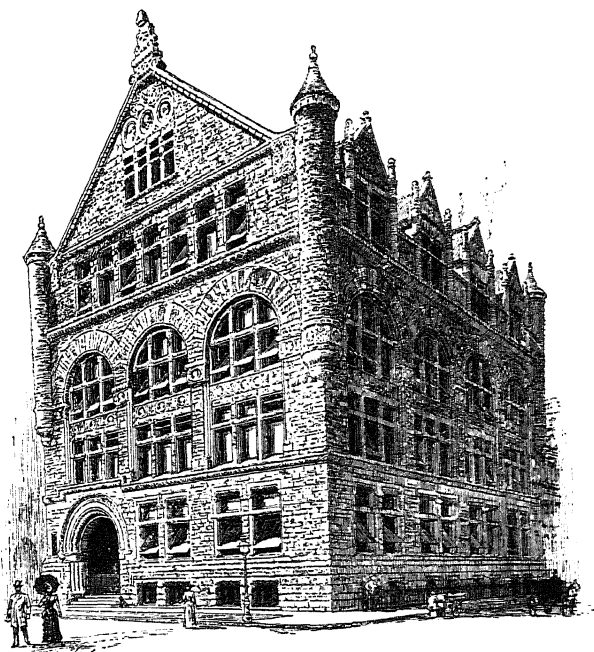


Fig. 47. Burnham & Root. Art Institute, Chicago, 1886-1887.

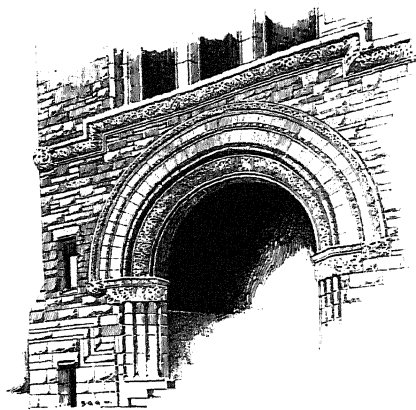


Fig. 48. Entrance, Art Institute.

Fortunately there is no other among the public or quasi-public buildings of Chicago of which the architecture is so hopeless and so irresponsible—no other that would so baffle the palæontological Paley⁸³ who should seek in it evidences of design, and that does not exhibit, at least, an architectural purpose, carried out with more or less of consistency and success. At the very centre of the commercial water front there was wisely reserved from traffic in the rebuilding of the town the “Lake Park,” a mile in extent, and some hundreds of feet in depth, which not only serves the purpose of affording a view of the lake from the business quarter, but also secures an effective foreground for the buildings that line its landward edge.⁸⁴ One of the oldest of these, young as all of them are, is the “Art Institute,” designed by Messrs. Burnham & Root [Figs. 46, 47, 48].⁸⁵ This is of a moderate altitude, and suffers somewhat from being dwarfed by the elevator buildings erected since, being but of three stories and a roof; but no neighbor could make it other than a vigorous and effective work, as dignified as the Board of Trade is uneasy, and as quiet as that is noisy. It is extremely simple in composition, as will be seen, and it bears very little ornament, this being for the most part concentrated upon the ample and deeply moulded archway of the entrance [Fig. 48]. It owes its effectiveness to the clearness of its division into the three main parts of base and superstructure and roof, to the harmonious

⁸³ Schuyler apparently refers to a rather obscure passage in William Paley, *Natural Theology*, 1st ed. (London, 1802). He states (see New York ed. of 1814, pp. 42f) that if we once begin to postulate the earlier existence of any species not presently extant, we would be free to suppose that all possible organs and structures had occurred in all possible combinations. This baseless theory is diametrically opposed to one implication of Cuvier's principle of articulation—namely, that the number of possible basic assemblages for organs and structures is comparatively limited; see above, p. 115n. Schuyler compares Paley's hypothesis to the anarchic freedom of combination of parts in picturesque architecture.

⁸⁴ See below, p. 276n.

⁸⁵ The complex architectural history of the Chicago Art Institute begins in 1882 with the purchase of a lot with a three-story building on the southwest corner of Michigan Ave. and Van Buren St. (Daniel) Burnham (1846-1912) & (John Wellborn) Root (1850-1891) added a brick extension to this building (1882; opened 1883). Subsequent purchase of adjoining property to the south made another brick extension possible in 1885, while the original building was demolished to make way for the Romanesque building discussed here. Designed by Root (cornerstone 1886; occupied 1887), it was the first architecturally significant home of the Institute. Almost immediately inadequate for the Institute's burgeoning collections, the building was sold to the Chicago Club in 1891 when the Institute obtained its present lakefront property from the city. Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge became the architects of the existing building on October 17, 1891. The buildings on the old site, except for one of the minor additions, were razed in 1930 for the present Chicago Club designed by Granger & Zollenbacher.

relation between them, and to the differences in the treatment of them that enhance this harmony. The Aristotelian precept that a work of art must have a beginning, a middle, and an end, is nowhere more conspicuously valid than in architecture, and nowhere does the neglect of it entail more unfortunate consequences. The severity of the basement, with its plain rectangular openings, is an effective introduction to the somewhat lighter and more open fenestration of the second and third stories, which are grouped to form the second term in the proportion, and this in turn to the range of openings in the gable of the shorter front, and to the row of peaked dormers in the longer that animate the sky-line and complete the composition. The impressiveness of the fronts is very greatly deepened by the vigorous framing of massive angle piers in which they are enclosed, the vigor of which is enhanced by the solid pinnaced turrets, corbelled out above the second story, that help to weight them, and that visibly abut the outward thrust of the arcades. It may be significant, with reference to the tendency of Western architecture, that this admirable building, admirable in the sobriety and moderation that are facilitated by its moderate size, is precisely what one would not expect to find in Chicago, so little is there evident in it of an intention to "collar the eye," or to challenge the attention it so very well repays.

In part, as we have just intimated, this modesty may be ascribed to the modest dimensions of the building. At any rate, it was out of the question in another important quasi-public building, which is the latest, and, at this writing, the loudest of the lions of Chicago—the Auditorium.⁸⁶ Whatever else a ten-story building, nearly 300 feet by more than 350 in area and 140 in height, with a tower rising 80 feet farther, may happen to be, it must be conspicuous, and it is no wise possible that its designer should make it appear bashful or unobtrusive. Of however retiring a disposition he may be, in such a situation he must brazen it out. It is in his power to adopt a very simple or a very elaborate treatment, and to imperil the success of his work by making it dull on the one hand or unquiet on the other. Messrs. Adler & Sullivan, the architects of the Auditorium, have chosen the better part in treating their huge fronts with great severity, insomuch that

⁸⁶ Auditorium, now Roosevelt College, NW cor. S. Michigan and E. Congress Aves., (1887-1889; extant) by Dankmar Adler (1844-1900) and Louis Sullivan (1856-1924). See also Hugh Morrison, *Louis Sullivan* (New York, 1935), chap. 3.

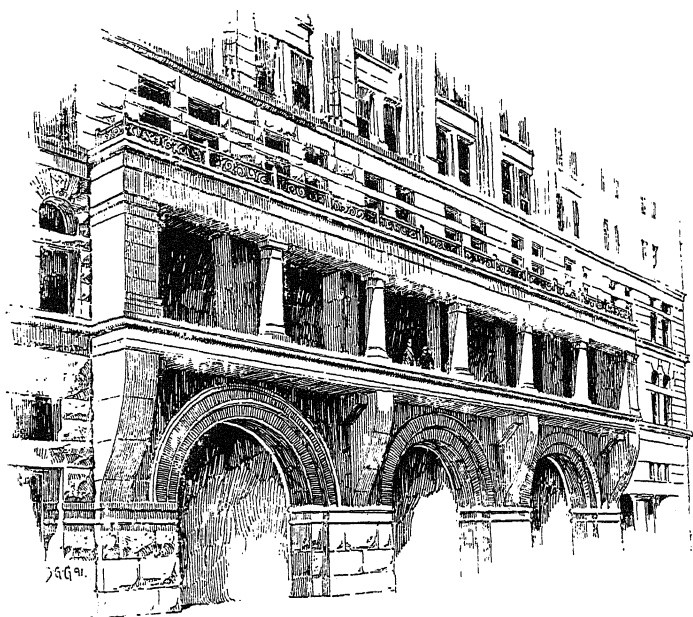


Fig. 49. Adler & Sullivan. Michigan Ave. entrance, Auditorium, Chicago, 1887-1889.

the building can scarcely be said to exhibit any "features," except the triple entrance on the lake front, with its overhanging balcony [Figs. 46, 49], and the square tower that rises over the southern front to a height of 225 feet. While they did wisely in showing that monotony had fewer terrors for them than restlessness, the monotony that undoubtedly amounts to a defect in the aspect of the completed work is by no means wholly or mainly attributable to them.⁸⁷ A place of popular entertainment, constructed upon a scale and with a massiveness to which we can scarcely find a parallel since Roman days, would present one of the worthiest and most interesting problems a modern architect could have if he were left to solve it unhampered. It is quite difficult enough to tax the power of any designer without any complications. The problem of design in the Chicago Auditorium is much complicated with requirements entirely irrelevant to its main purpose. The lobbies, the auditorium, and the stage of a great theatre, which are its essential parts, are all susceptible of an exterior expression more

⁸⁷ Compare with similar remarks by Schuyler about George B. Post's New York Produce Exchange (1884-C).

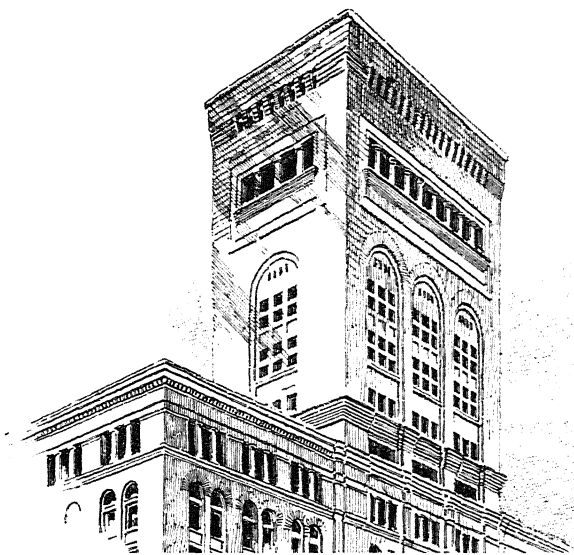


Fig. 50. Tower, Auditorium.

truthful and more striking than has yet been attained, in spite of many earnest and interesting essays. In the interior of the Auditorium, where the architects were left free, they have devoted themselves to solving their real problem with a high degree of success, and have attained an impressive simplicity and largeness. We are not dealing with interiors, however, and they were required to envelop the outside of their theatre in a shell of many-storied commercial architecture, which forbade them even to try for a monumental expression of their great hall. In the main, their exterior appears and must be judged only as a "business block." They have their exits and their entrances, and it is really only in these features that the exterior betrays the primary purpose of the building. The tower, even, is evidently not so much monumental as utilitarian [Fig. 50]. It is prepared for in the substructure only by a slight and inadequate projection of the piers, while it is itself obviously destined for profitable occupancy, being a small three-story business block, superimposed upon a huge ten-story business block. Such a structure cannot be converted into a monumental feature by making it more massive at the top than it is at the bottom, even though the massiveness be as artistically accentuated as it is in the tower of the Auditorium by the powerful open colonnade and

the strong machicolated cornice in which it culminates. Waiving, as the designers have been compelled to do, the main purpose of the structure, and considering it as a commercial building, the Auditorium does not leave very much to be desired. The basement, especially, which consists of three stories of granite darker than the limestone of the superstructure, and appropriately rough-faced, is a vigorous and dignified performance, in which the expression of rugged strength is enhanced by the small and deep openings, and in which the necessarily large openings of the ground-floor are prevented from enfeebling the design by the massiveness of the lintels and flat arches that enclose them, and of the piers and pillars by which these are supported. The superstructure is scarcely worthy of this basement. The triple vertical division of the wall is effectively proportioned, but a much stronger demarcation is needed between the second and third members than is furnished by the discontinuous sill-course of the eighth story, while a greater projection, a greater depth, and a more vigorous modelling of the main cornice, and an enrichment of the attic beneath, would go far to relieve the baldness and monotony that are the defects of the design, and that are scarcely to be condoned because there are architectural faults much worse and much more frequent, which the designers have avoided. It is only, as has been said, in the entrances that they have been permitted to exhibit the object of the building. Really, it is only in the entrance on the Lake front, for the triplet of stilted arches at the base of the tower is not a very felicitous or a very congruous feature. The three low arches of the Lake front are of a Roman largeness—true vomitoria—and their effectiveness is increased by the simplicity of their treatment, by the ample lateral abutment provided for them, and by the long and shallow balcony that overhangs them. With the arches themselves this makes a very impressive feature, albeit the balcony is a very questionable feature. Even to the layman there must be a latent contradiction in the intercalation of the pillar to relieve the bearing of a lintel, when the pillar is referred to an unsupported shelf, obviously lighter and weaker than the lintel itself. This contradiction is not explained away by the vigor and massiveness of the shallow corbels that really account for the alternate columns, and it suggests that the construction so exhibited is not the true construction at all, and leaves this latter to be inferred without any help from the architecture. Even if one waives his objec-

tion to architectural forms that do not agree with the structural facts, it is surely not pedantic to require that the construction asserted by the forms shall be plausible to the extent of agreeing with itself. It is a pity that there should be such a drawback from a feature so effective; but the drawback does not prevent the feature from being effective, nor do the shortcomings we have been considering in the design of the Auditorium, nor even the much more serious obstacle that was inherent in the problem and imposed upon the architects, prevent it from being a very impressive structure, and justifying the pride with which it is regarded by all patriotic Chicagoans.

But, as has been intimated, it is not in monumental edifices that the characteristic building of Chicago is to be looked for. The "business block," entirely utilitarian in purpose, and monumental only in magnitude and in solidity of construction, is the true and typical embodiment in building of the Chicago idea. This might be said, of course, of any American city. Undoubtedly the most remarkable achievements of our architects and the most creditable have been in commercial architecture. But in this respect Chicago is more American than any of the Eastern cities, where there are signs, even in the commercial quarters, of division of interest and infirmity of purpose. In none of them does the building bespeak such a singleness of devotion, or indicate that life means so exclusively a living. Even the exceptions prove the rule by such tokens as the modest dimensions of the Art Institute and the concealment of the Auditorium in the heart of a business block. It does not by any means follow that the business blocks are uninteresting. There are singularly few exceptions to the rule of dismalness in the buildings that were hurriedly run up after the fire. One of these exceptions, the American Express Company, has an extrinsic interest as being the work of Mr. Richardson,⁸⁸ and as being, so far as it need be classified, an example of Victorian Gothic, although its openings are all lintelled, instead of the Provençal Romanesque to which its author afterwards addicted himself with such success. So successful an example is it that an eminent but possibly bilious English architect, who visited Chicago at an early stage of the rebuilding, declared it to be the only thing in the town worth looking at—a judgment that

⁸⁸ American Merchants' Union Express Co. Building, 21-29 W. Monroe St. (1872-1874; two stories added 1896; demolished 1919). See J. Carson Webster, "Richardson's American Express Building," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 9 (Mar.-May 1950), 21-30.

does not seem so harsh to the tourist of to-day who compares it with its thus disesteemed contemporaries.⁸⁹ It is a sober and straightforward performance in a safe monochrome of olive sandstone, and it thus lacks the note of that variety of Victorian Gothic that Mr. Ruskin's eloquence stimulated untrained American designers to produce, in which the restlessness of unstudied forms is still further tormented by the spotty application of color. From this variety of Victorian Gothic Chicago is happily free. A gabled building in brick and sandstone opposite the Palmer House is almost a unique, and not at all an unfavorable, example.⁹⁰ The business streets that are now merely dismal would have been much more aggressively painful if the incapable architects who built them had deviated from the comparative safety of their cast-iron Renaissance into a style that put them upon their individual want of resources. Moreover, throughout the commercial quarter any attempt at a structural use of color is sure shortly to be frustrated by coal-smoke. Upon the whole, it is a matter for congratulation that the earlier rebuilders of Chicago, being what they were, should have been so ignorant or careless of what was going on elsewhere, which, had they been aware of it, they would have been quite certain to misapply. Not only did they thus escape the frantic result that came of Victorian Gothic in untutored hands, but they escaped the pettiness and puerility that resulted of "Queen Anne," even when it was done by designers who ought to have known better. These pages contain a disparagement of that curious mode of building in a paper written when it was dressed in its little brief authority and playing its most fantastic tricks.⁹¹ Now it is so well recognized that Queen Anne is dead, that it seems strange educated architects ever could have fancied they detected the promise and potency of architectural life in her cold remains. This most evanescent of fashions seems never to have prevailed in Chicago at all.

One of the earliest of the more modern and characteristic of the commercial structures of Chicago, the Field Building, is by Mr. Richardson⁹² also, a huge warehouse covering a whole square, and seven

⁸⁹ We have been unable to locate this reference.

⁹⁰ A rudimentary sketch of the building to which Schuyler probably refers appears in a plate from Rand, McNally & Co., *Bird's-Eye Views and Guide to Chicago* (Chicago, 1898), reproduced in Randall, *Building Construction in Chicago*, p. 167. The Victorian Gothic building at the right edge of the plate next to the Mentor Block answers his description.

⁹¹ See below, pp. 453-487.

⁹² Marshall Field Wholesale Store, block bounded by S. Wells, W. Quincy, S. Franklin,



Fig. 51.
Henry Hobson Richardson.
Marshall Field Wholesale
Store, Chicago, 1885-1887.

stories high [Fig. 51]. With such an opportunity, Mr. Richardson could be trusted implicitly at least to make the most of his dimensions, and large as the building is in fact, it looks interminably big. Its bigness is made apparent by the simplicity of its treatment and the absence of any lateral division whatever. Simplicity, indeed, could scarcely go further. The vast expanses of the fronts are unrelieved by any ornament except a leaf in the cornice, and a rudimentary capital in the piers and mullions of the colonnaded attic. The effect of the mass is due wholly to its magnitude, to the disposition of its openings, and to the emphatic exhibition of the masonic structure. The openings, except in the attic, and except for an ample pier reserved at each corner, are equally spaced throughout. The vertical division is limited to a sharp separation from the intermediate wall veil of the basement

and W. Adams Sts. (1885-1887; demolished 1930). See also Hitchcock, *Richardson*, pp. 273-277.

on one hand, and of the attic on the other. It must be owned that there is even a distinct infelicity in the arrangement of the five stories of this intermediate wall, the two superposed arcades, the upper of which, by reason of its multiplied supports, is the more solid of aspect, and between which there is no harmonious relation, but contrariwise a competition. Nevertheless, the main division is so clear, and the handling throughout so vigorous, as to carry off even a more serious defect. Nothing of its kind could be more impressive than the rugged expanse of masonry, of which the bonding is expressed throughout, and which in the granite basement becomes Cyclopean in scale, and in the doorway especially Cyclopean in rude strength. The great pile is one of the most interesting as it is one of the most individual examples of American commercial building. In it the vulgarity of the "commercial palace" is gratefully conspicuous by its absence, and it is as monumental in its massiveness and durability as it is grimly utilitarian in expression.

It is in this observance of the proprieties of commercial architecture, and in this self-denying rejection of an ornateness improper to it, that the best of the commercial architecture of Chicago is a welcome surprise to the tourist from the East. When the rebuilding of the business quarter of Boston was in progress, and while that city was for the most part congratulating itself upon the display of the skill of its architects for which the fire had opened a field, Mr. Richardson observed to the author of these remarks that there was more character in the plain and solid warehouses that had been destroyed than in the florid edifices by which they had been replaced. The saying was just, for the burned Boston was as unmistakably commercial as much of the rebuilt Boston is irrelevantly palatial.⁹³ In the warehouse just noticed, Mr. Richardson himself resisted this besetting temptation of the architect, and his work certainly loses nothing of the simplicity which, with the uninstructed builders of old Boston, was in large part mere ignorance and unskilfulness, but emphasizes it by the superior power of distributing his masses that belonged to him as a trained and sensitive designer; for the resources of an artist are required to give an artistic and poignant expression even of rudeness. The rebuilt commercial quarter of Boston is by no means an extreme

⁹³ On the palatial commercial style (not Boston, but comparable examples in New York), see Weisman, *Art Bulletin*, 36, pp. 285-302.

example of misplaced ornateness. Within the past three or four years Wall Street has been converted from the hum-drum respectability of an old-fashioned business thoroughfare to a street of commercial palaces, the aspect of which must contain an element of grievousness to the judicious, who see that the builders have lavished their repertory of ornament and variety on buildings to which nobody resorts for pleasure, but everybody for business alone, and that they have left themselves nothing further to do in the way of enrichment when they come to do temples and palaces, properly so called. Mr. Ruskin has fallen into deep, and largely into deserved discredit as an architectural critic, by promulgating rhapsodies as dogmas. His intellectual frivolity is even more evident and irritating by reason of the moral earnestness that attends it, recalling that perfervid pulpiteer of whom a like-minded eulogist affirmed that "he wielded his prurient imagination like a battle-axe in the service of the Lord of Hosts." All the same, lovers of architecture owe him gratitude for his eloquent inculcation of some of the truths that he arrived at by feeling, however inconclusive is the reasoning by which he endeavors to support them, and one of these is the text, so much preached from in the "Seven Lamps," that "where rest is forbidden, so is ornament."⁹⁴ Wall Street and the business quarter of Boston, and every commercial palace in every city, violate, in differing degrees, this plain dictate of good sense and good taste, even in the very rare instances in which the misplacement of the ornateness is the worst thing that can be alleged against it. In the best of the commercial buildings of Chicago there is nothing visible of the conflict of which we hear so much from architects, mostly in the way of complaint, between the claims of "art" and the claims of utility, nor any evidence of a desire to get the better of a practical client by smuggling architecture upon him, and deceiving him for his own good and the glory of his architect. It is a very good lesson to see how the strictly architectural success of the commercial buildings is apt to be directly in proportion to the renunciation by the designers of conventional "architecturesqueness," and to their loyal acceptance at all points of the utilitarian conditions under which they are working.

The Studebaker Building ⁹⁵ is one of the show buildings of Chicago,

⁹⁴ Ruskin, *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, "Lamp of Beauty."

⁹⁵ Studebaker (now Fine Arts) Building, 410 S. Michigan Ave., (1884-1886; extant) by Solon Spencer Beman (1853-1914).

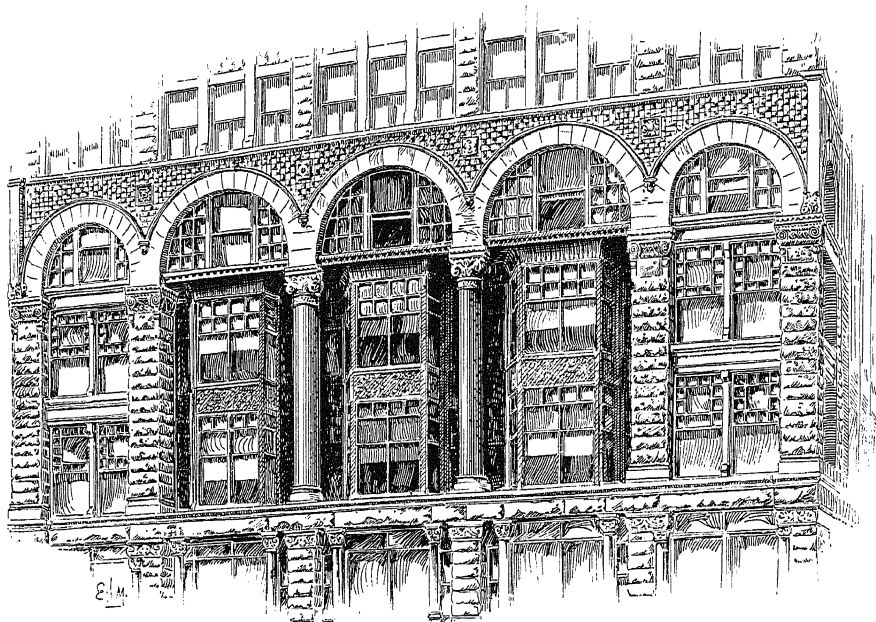


Fig. 52. S. S. Beman. Studebaker Building, Chicago, 1884-1886.

but it cannot be said to deserve this particular praise in so high a degree as several less celebrated structures [Figs. 46, 52]. It partakes—shall we say?—too much of the palatial character of Devonshire Street and Wall Street to be fairly representative of the severity of commercial architecture in Chicago. It is very advantageously placed, fronting the Lake Park, and it is in several respects not unworthy of its situation. The arrangement of the first five stories is striking, and the arcade that embraces the three upper of these is a striking and well-studied feature, with detail very good in itself and very well adjusted in place and in scale. It is the profusion of this detail and the lavish introduction of carved marble and of polished granite shafts that first impress every beholder with its palatial rather than commercial character, but this character is not less given to the front, or to that part of it which has character, by the very general composition that makes the front so striking. An arcade superposed upon two colonnades, which are together of less than its own height, can scarcely fail of impressiveness; but here it loses some of its impressiveness in losing all its significance by reason of its subdivision into three equal stories, none of them differ-

ing in purpose from any other or from the colonnade below, and the larger grouping that simulates a lofty hall above two minor stories is thus seen to be merely capricious. Of course pretty much the same criticism may be passed upon most American works of commercial architecture, and upon the best not less than upon the worst, but that it cannot be passed upon the best commercial buildings of Chicago is their peculiar praise. Moreover, the Studebaker Building has some marked defects peculiar to its design. The flanking piers of the building, in spite of the effort made to increase their apparent massiveness by a solid treatment of the terminal arches at the base, are painfully thin and inadequate, and their tenuity is emphasized by the modelling into nook shafts of their inner angles in the second story. These are serious blemishes upon the design of the first five stories, and these stories exhaust the architectural interest of the building. There is something even ludicrous in the sudden and complete collapse of the architecture above the large arcade, as if the ideas of the designer had all at once given out, or rather as if an untrained builder had been called upon to add three stories to the unfinished work of a scholarly architect. In truth, this superstructure does not show a single felicity either of disposition or detail, but is wholly mean and commonplace. It suffices to vulgarize the building below it, and it is itself quite superfluously vulgarized by the unmeaning and irrelevant conical roofs with which the sky-line is tormented. If the substructure be amenable to the criticism that it is not commercial architecture, the superstructure is amenable to the more radical criticism that it is not architecture at all.

The Owings Building ⁹⁶ is another conspicuous commercial structure that invites the same criticism of not being strictly commercial, but in a very different way [Fig. 53]. There is here no prodigality of ornament, and no irrelevant preciousness of material. A superstructure of grayish brick surmounts a basement of gray-stone, and the only decoration is reserved for the main entrance, which it is appropriate to signalize and render conspicuous even in works of the barest utility. This is attained here by the lofty gable, crocketed and covered with carving, that rises above the plain archway which forms the entrance itself. The lintelled openings of the basement elsewhere are of a Puri-

⁹⁶ Owings Building, SE cor. E. Adams and Dearborn Sts., (erected 1886; demolished) by Henry Ives Cobb (1859-1931) & Charles S. Frost (1856-1932).

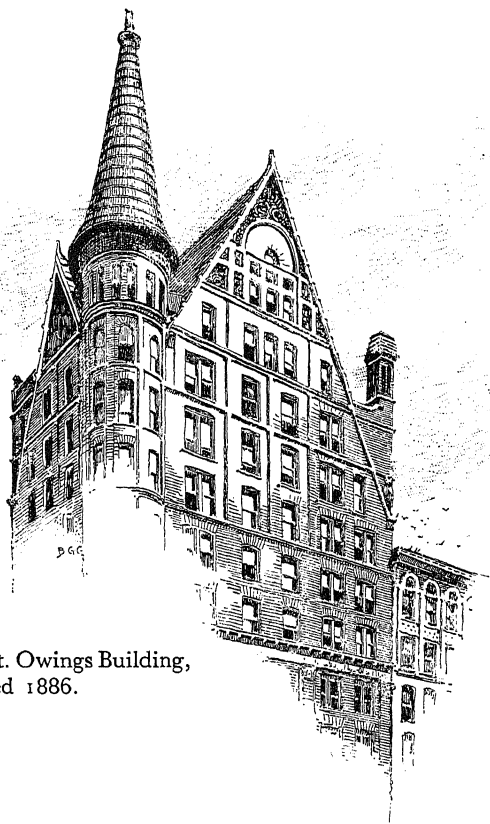


Fig. 53. Cobb & Frost. Owings Building,
Chicago, completed 1886.

tanical severity, and so are the arched openings of the brick superstructure. Neither is there the least attempt to suggest the thing that is not in the interior arrangement by way of giving variety and interest to the exterior. In the treatment of the wall space, the only one of the "unnecessary features," in which Mr. Ruskin declares architecture to consist, is the corniced frieze above the fourth story of the superstructure, with its suggested support of tall and slim pilasters; and this is quite justifiable as giving the building a triple division, and distinguishing the main wall from the gable. For this purpose, however, obviously enough, the dividing feature should be placed between the two parts it is meant to differentiate; and in the present instance this line is two stories higher than the point actually selected, and is now marked only by a light string course. If the emphatic horizontal belt had been raised these two stories, the division it creates would not

only have corresponded to the organic division of the building, but another requisite of architectural composition would have been fulfilled, inasmuch as one of the three members would visibly have predominated over the others; whereas now the three are too nearly equal. It is quite true that the prolongation of the pilasters through two more stories would have made them spindle quite intolerably, but in any case they are rather superfluous and impertinent, and it would have decorated the fronts to omit them. The accentuation of vertical lines by extraneous features is not precisely what is needed in a twelve-story building of these dimensions. In these points, however, there is no departure from the spirit of commercial architecture. That occurs here, not in detail, but in the general scheme that gives the building its picturesqueness of outline. The corbelled turret at the angle makes more eligible the rooms its openings light, but the steep gabled roofs which this turret unites and dominates plainly enough fail to utilize to the utmost the spaces they enclose, and so far violate the conditions of commercial architecture. It seems ungracious to find fault with them on that account, they are so successfully studied in mass and in detail, and the group they make with the turret is so spirited and effective; but nevertheless they evidently do not belong to an office building, and, to borrow the expression of a Federal judge upon a famous occasion, their very picturesqueness is *aliunde*.⁹⁷

We have been speaking, of course, of the better commercial edifices, and it is by no means to be inferred that Chicago does not contain "elevator buildings" as disunited and absurd and restless as those of any other American town. About these select few, also, there is nothing especially characteristic. They might be in New York, or Boston, or Philadelphia, for any local color that they exhibit. It is otherwise with the commercial buildings designed by Messrs. Burnham & Root. With the striking exception of Mr. Richardson's Field Building, the names of these designers connote what there is of characteristically Chicagoan in the architecture of the business streets, so that, after all, the individuality is not local, but personal. The untimely and deplorable death of John Wellborn Root makes it proper to say that the individuality was mainly his. It consists largely in a clearer perception

⁹⁷ Legal counsel has been unable to cite the case to which Schuyler refers; but Ballantine's *Law Dictionary* defines *aliunde* as "from another place." Schuyler means that the turret of the Owings Building is out of keeping with the rest of the design.

than one finds elsewhere of the limitations and conditions of commercial architecture, or in a more austere and self-denying acting upon that perception. This is the quality that such towering structures as the Insurance Exchange, the Phoenix Building, and "The Rookery" have in common,⁹⁸ and that clearly distinguishes them from the mass of commercial palaces in Chicago or elsewhere. There is no sacrifice to picturesqueness of the utilitarian purpose in their general form, as in the composition of the Owings Building, and no denial of it in detail, as in the irrelevant arcade of the Studebaker Building. Their flat roofs are not tormented into protuberances in order to animate their sky-lines, and those of them that are built around an interior court are frankly hypæthral. Nor is there in any of them any incongruous preciousness of material. They are of brick, brown or red, upon stone basements, and the ornament is such, and only such, as is needed to express and to emphasize the structural divisions and dispositions. These are negative merits, it is true, but as our commercial architecture goes, they are not less meritorious on that account, and one is inclined to wish that the architects of all the commercial palaces might attend to the preachments upon the fitness of things that these edifices deliver, for they have very positive merits also. They are all architectural compositions, and not mere walls promiscuously pierced with openings, or, what is much commoner, mere ranges of openings scantily framed in strips of wall. They are sharply and unmistakably divided into the parts that every building needs to be a work of architecture, the members that mark the division are carefully and successfully adjusted with reference to their place and their scale, and the treatment of the different parts is so varied as to avoid both monotony and miscellany. The angle piers, upon the visible sufficiency of which the effectiveness, especially of a lofty building, so largely depends, never fail in this sufficiency, and the superior solidity that the basement of any building needs as a building, when it cannot be attained in fact by reason of commercial exigencies, is suggested in a more rugged and more massive treatment not less than in the employment of a visibly stronger

⁹⁸ Insurance Exchange (later the Continental Bank) Building, SW cor. S. LaSalle and W. Adams Sts. (completed 1885; demolished 1912). Phoenix (later Austin) Building, SW cor. Clark and Jackson Sts. (completed 1886; two stories added after 1892; demolished). Rookery Building, 209 S. LaSalle St., (erected 1884-1886; extant) so named because it replaced a structure which was a favorite roost for pigeons. All by Burnham & Root. On Root's premature death, see above, p. 98n.

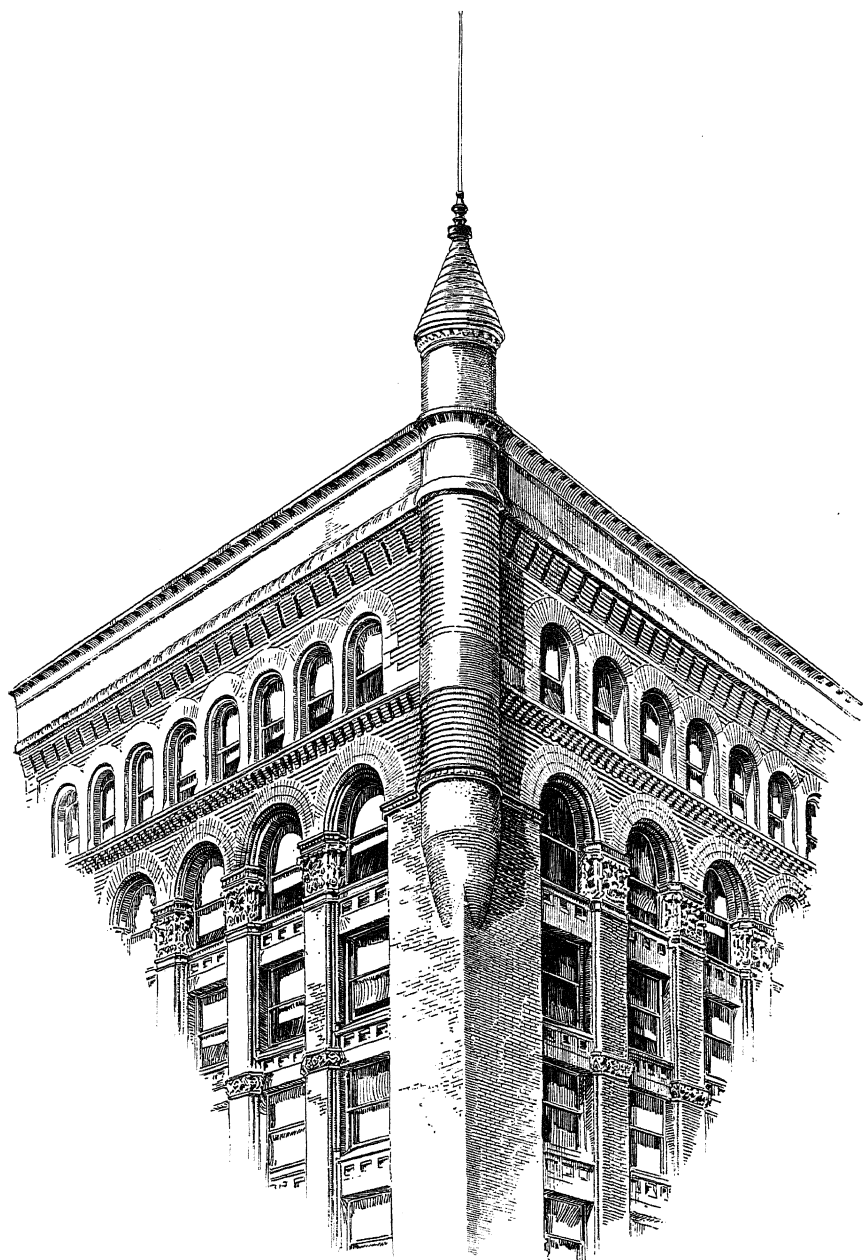


Fig. 54. Burnham & Root. Insurance Exchange, Chicago,
completed 1885.

material. These dispositions are aided by the devices at the command of the architect. The angle piers are weighted to the eye by the solid corbelled pinnacles at the top, as in the Insurance Exchange and the Rookery [Fig. 54], or stiffened by a slight withdrawal that gives an additional vertical line on each side of the arris, as in the Phoenix, while the same purpose is partly subserved in the Rookery by the projection from the angle of the tall metallic lantern standards that repeat and enforce this line. The lateral division of the principal fronts is similar in all three structures. A narrow central compartment is distinguished in treatment, by an actual projection or by the thickening of the pier, from the longer wings, while the coincidence of this central division with the main entrance relieves the arrangement from the unpleasant look of an arrangement obviously forced or arbitrary. In the Insurance Exchange the centre is signaled by a balconied projection over the entrance, extending through the architectural basement—the dado, so to speak, which is here the principal division; by a widening of the pier and a concentration of the central openings in the second division, and above by an interruption of the otherwise unbroken arcade that traverses the attic. In the Rookery it is marked by a slight projection, which above is still further projected into tall corbelled pinnacles, and the wall thus bounded is slightly bowed, and its openings diminished and multiplied. In the Phoenix Building this bowing is carried so much further as to result in a corbelled oriel, extending through four stories, and repeated on a smaller scale at each end of the principal front and in the centre of each shorter front [Fig. 55]. This feature may perhaps be excepted from the general praise the buildings deserve of a strict adherence to their utilitarian purpose. Not that even in Chicago a business man may not have occasion to look out of the window, nor that, if he does, he may not be pardoned for desiring to extend his view beyond the walls and windows of over the way. An oriel-window is not necessarily an incongruity in a "business block," but the treatment of these oriels is a little fantastic and a little ornate for their destination, and belongs rather to domestic than to commercial architecture, and it is not in any case fortunate. This is the sole exception, however, to be made on this score. The entrances, to be sure, are enriched with a decoration beyond the mere expression of the structure which has elsewhere been the rule, but they do not appear incongruous. The entrance to a

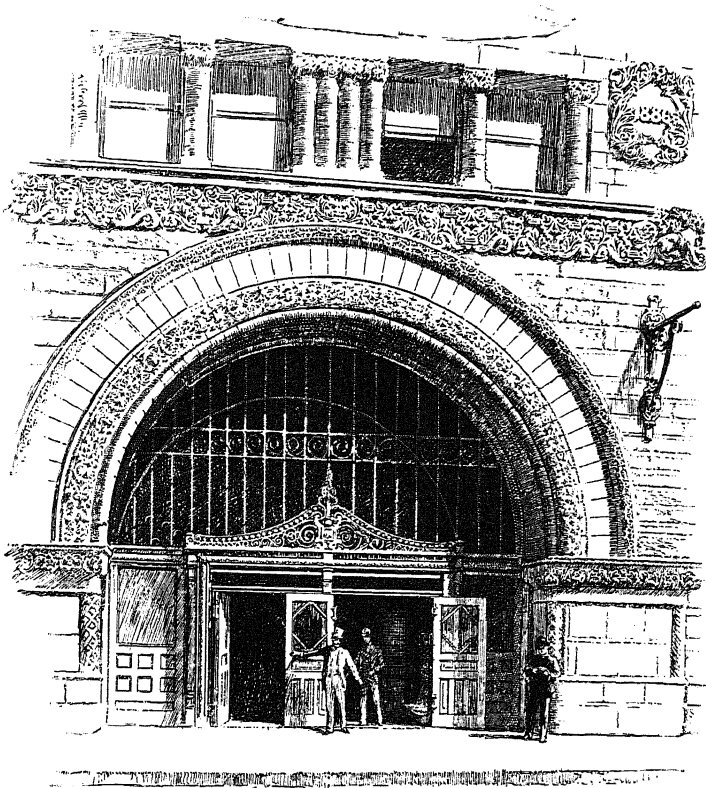


Fig. 55. Burnham & Root. Entrance, Phoenix Building, Chicago, completed 1886.

building that houses the population of a considerable village must be wide, and if its height were regulated by that of the human figure it would resemble the burrow by which the Esquimau gains access to his snow-hut, and become a manifest absurdity as the portal of a ten-story building. It must be large and conspicuous, and it should be stately, and it were a "very cynical asperity" to deny to the designer the privilege of enhancing by ornament the necessary stateliness of the one feature of his building which must arrest, for a moment at least, the attention of the most preoccupied visitor. It cannot be said that such a feature as the entrance of the Phoenix Building is intensely characteristic of a modern business block, but it can be said that in its place it does not in the least disturb the impression the structure makes of a modern business block [Fig. 55]. If beauty be its own

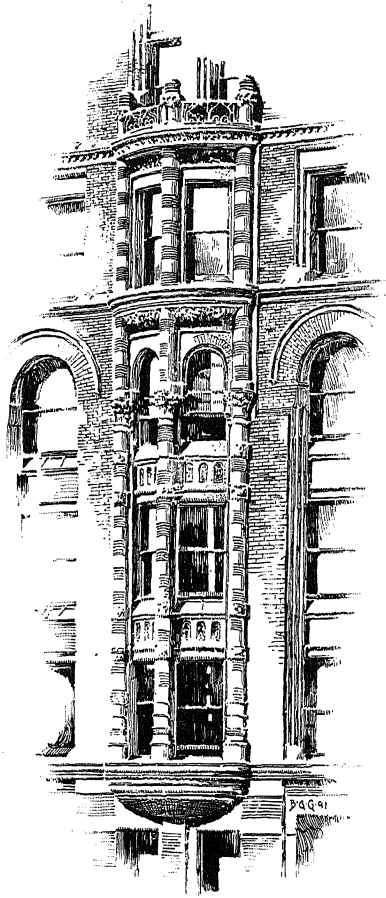


Fig. 56. Oriel, Phoenix Building.

excuse for being, this entrance needs no other, for assuredly it is one of the most beautiful and artistic works that American architecture has to show, so admirably proportioned it is, and so admirably detailed, so clear and emphatic without exaggeration is the expression of the structure, and so rich and refined the ornament. Upon the whole these buildings, by far the most successful and impressive of the business buildings of Chicago, not merely attest the skill of their architects, but reward their self-denial in making the design for a commercial building out of its own elements, however unpromising these may seem; in

permitting the building, in a word, to impose its design upon them and in following its indications, rather than in imposing upon the building a design derived from anything but a consideration of its own requirements. Hence it is that, without showing anywhere any strain after originality, these structures are more original than structures in which such a strain is evident. "The merit of originality is not novelty; it is sincerity." ⁹⁹ The designer did not permit himself to be diverted from the problem in hand by a consideration of the irrelevant beauties of Roman theaters, or Florentine palaces, or Flemish town-halls, and accordingly the work is not reminiscent of these nor of any previous architectural types, of which so many contemporary buildings have the air of being adaptations under extreme difficulties. It is to the same directness and sincerity in the attempt to solve a novel problem that these buildings owe what is not their least attraction, in the sense they convey of a reserved power. The architect of a commercial palace seems often to be discharging his architectural vocabulary and wreaking his entire faculty of expression upon that contradiction in terms. Some of the buildings of which we have been speaking exhibit this prodigality. There is something especially grateful and welcome in turning from one of them to a building like one of those now in question, which suggests by comparison that, after he had completed the design of it, the architect might still have had something left—in his portfolios and in his intellect.

In considering the domestic architecture of Chicago it is necessary to recur to the topographical conditions, for these have had as marked an influence upon it as they have had upon the commercial quarter, although this influence operates in almost the opposite direction. The commercial centre—the quarter of wholesale traffic and of "high finance"—is huddled into the space between the lake and the river. But when this limit is once passed there is no natural limit. No longer pent up, the whole boundless continent is Chicago's, and the instinct of expansion is at liberty to assert itself in every direction but the east, where it is confronted by Lake Michigan. There is thus no east side in Chicago to supplement the north and the west and the south sides, among which the dwellings of the people are divided, but there is no natural obstacle whatsoever to the development of the city in these three directions, and no natural reason why it should

⁹⁹ Carlyle, *Heroes and Hero Worship*, lecture 4.

expand in one rather than in another except what is again furnished by the lake. To the minority of people, who live where they will and not where they must, this is a considerable exception, and one would suppose that the fashionable quarter would be that quarter from which the lake is most accessible. This is distinctly enough the north side, which a stranger, without the slightest interest, present or prospective, in Chicago real estate, may be pardoned for inferring to be the most desirable for residence. For it happens that the dwellers upon the south side are cut off from any practical or picturesque use of the lake by the fact that the shore to the south of the city is occupied by railroad tracks,¹⁰⁰ and the nearest houses of any pretensions are turned away from the water, of which only the horses stabled in the rear are in a position to enjoy the view. The inference that the north is the most eligible of the sides one finds to be violently combated by the residents of the south and the west, and he finds also that, instead of one admittedly fashionable quarter, as in every other city, Chicago has three claimants for that distinction. Each of these quarters has its centre and its dependencies, and between each two there is a large area either unoccupied, or occupied with dwellings very much humbler than those that line the avenues that are severally the boasts of the competing sides. The three appear to have received nearly equal shares of municipal attention, for there is a park for each—nay, there are three parks for the west side, though these are thus far well beyond the limit of fashion if not of population, and nominally two for the south side, though even these bear more the relation to the quarter for which they were provided than the Central Park bore to New York in 1870 than that which it bears in 1891.¹⁰¹ They are still, that is to say, rather out-

¹⁰⁰ Reference to the Illinois Central tracks on the lakefront of the South Side of Chicago north of Jackson Park; see note immediately following.

¹⁰¹ In the early nineties, the major portions of the Chicago park system reflected the three sections of the city in its administration by three separate commissions. The southern anchor of the system, Jackson Park and its connection via the Esplanade to Washington Park, fell to the jurisdiction of the South Park Commissioners. Boulevards from the latter park linked it successively to Douglas, Garfield, and Humboldt Parks, the major areas under the jurisdiction of the West Chicago Park Commissioners. More boulevards brought one back to the lakefront at Lincoln Park on the north shore, administered by the Lincoln Park Commissioners. As Chicago's oldest park, having been set aside in 1869, Lincoln was the cynosure of the system when Schuyler visited the city. For a convenient account of the system around 1890, see Clarence Pullen, "The Parks and Parkways of Chicago," *Harper's Weekly*, 35 (May 30, 1891), 411-416 +. The extremities of this large semicircular system at Lincoln and Jackson Parks were connected along the lakefront by an outer drive and ribbon park in an effort extending through almost half a century. Any account of this heroic achievement properly

lying pleasure-grounds accessible to excursionists than parks in actual public use. Lincoln Park, the park of the north side, is the only one of the parks of Chicago that as yet deserves this description, and the north side is much to be congratulated upon possessing such a resort. It has the great advantage of an unobstructed frontage upon the lake, and it is kept with the same skill and propriety with which it was planned.

It will be evident from all this that in the three residential quarters of Chicago there is plenty of room, and it is this spaciousness that gives a pervading characteristic to its domestic architecture. The most fashionable avenues are not filled with the serried ranks of houses one expects to see in a city of a million people. On the contrary, in Michigan Avenue and Prairie Avenue, on the south side, and in the corresponding streets in the other quarters, there is commonly a considerable strip of sward in front of the house, and often at the sides as well. The houses are often completely or partly detached, and they are frequently of a generous breadth, and always of a moderate height. Three stories is the limit, which is rarely exceeded even in the costliest dwellings. Conditions so different prevail in all the Eastern cities, even in Philadelphia, the roominess of which is one of its sources of local pride, that to the inhabitant of any one of them the domestic building of Chicago indicates a much less populous city than Chicago is, and its

opens with Montgomery Ward's court battle to save Lake Front Park, a park between Lincoln and Jackson Parks which opened the central business district to the lake. (This park, included the area from Randolph to 12th Sts. and from Michigan Ave. to the Illinois Central tracks.) Ward went to court over building on the lakefront, and, after a series of legal battles beginning in 1890, eventually won a decision against further building in 1897. Ward's victory encouraged those who envisioned a continuous park strip along the lakefront, as did a court decision in 1892 which deprived the Illinois Central of riparian rights to the southern boundary of Lake Front Park at 12th St. From the mid-nineties on, development of Lake Front Park (rechristened Grant Park in 1901) proceeded under the jurisdiction of the South Park Commissioners. The next major step in the lakefront development was the start of Outer Drive as a continuous parkway connecting Lincoln and Jackson Parks. The State Legislature authorized the Drive in 1903, although work only got under way in 1911 north and south of the central section. In 1911, too, the city acquired the riparian rights of the Illinois Central south of 12th St. This acquisition made possible the creation of a park on filled land (Burnham Park) connecting Grant and Jackson Parks. Authorized by the U.S. War Department in 1920, Burnham Park was partially opened for the Century of Progress Exposition of 1933 built upon it, and was completed in 1938. Federal permission was also necessary for the construction of the connecting link of the Outer Drive between Lincoln and South Parks. Granted in 1926, and renewed in 1929 because work was not begun within a year after the first authorization, this permission inaugurated the final phase of the construction of the Drive. In 1937, the opening of a bridge over the Chicago River completed Outer Drive.

character seems rather suburban than urban. In the main, this character of suburbanity is heightened by the architectural treatment of the dwellings. There are exceptions, and some of them are conspicuous and painful exceptions; but the rule is that the architect attempts to make the house even of a rich man look like a home rather than like a palace, and that there is very little of the mere ostentation of riches. Even upon the speculative builder this feeling seems to have imposed itself; and however crude and violent his work may be in other ways, it does not very often offend in this particular direction. The commercial palace against which we have been inveighing is by no means so offensive as the domestic sham palace, and from this latter offence Chicago is much freer than most older American cities. The grateful result is that the houses in the best quarters are apt to look eminently "livable;" and though inequalities of fortune are visible enough, there is not so visible as to be conspicuous any attempt of the more fortunate to force them on the notice of the less fortunate. In other words, Chicago is, in its outward aspect at least, the most democratic of great American cities, and its aspect increases one's wonder that anarchism should have sprung up in this rich and level soil—to which, of course, the answer is that it didn't, being distinctly an exotic.

Another characteristic of the domestic architecture of Chicago there is—less prevalent than this absence of pretentiousness and mere display, but still prevalent enough to be very noteworthy—and that is the evidence it affords of an admiration for the work of Mr. Richardson, which, if not inordinate, is at least indiscriminating and misapplied. What region of our land, indeed, is not full of his labors, done vicariously, and with a zeal not according to knowledge? In Chicago his misunderstood example has fructified much more in the quarters of residence than in the business quarters, insomuch that one can scarcely walk around a square, either in the north or in the south side, without seeing some familiar feature or detail, which has often been borrowed outright from one of his works, and is reproduced without reference to its context [Fig. 57]. Now the great and merited success of Richardson was as personal and incommunicable as any artistic success can be. It was due to his faculty of reducing a complicated problem to its simplest and most forcible expression. More specifically, it was due to his faculty for seizing some feature of his building, developing it into predominance, and skilfully subordinating the rest of his composition

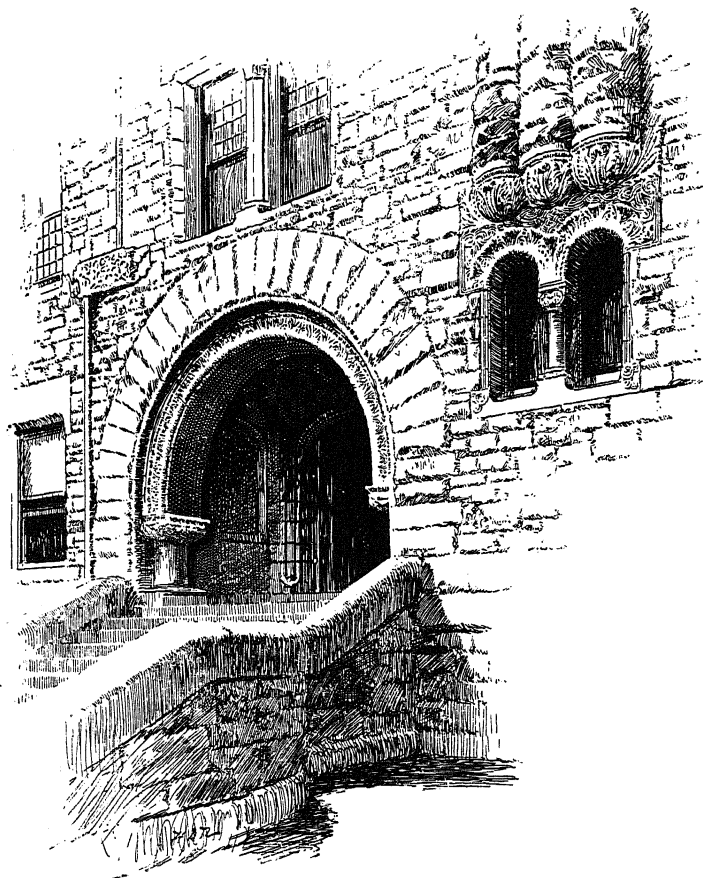


Fig. 57. Janua Richardsoniensis. N^oImporte Qui, architect.

to it, until this feature became the building. It was his power of disposing masses, his insistence upon largeness and simplicity, his impatience of niggling, his straightforward and virile handling of his tasks, that made his successes brilliant, and even his failures interesting. Very much of all this is a matter of temperament, and Richardson's best buildings were the express images of that impetuous and exuberant personality that all who knew him remember. He used to tell of a tourist from Holland in whom admiration for his art had induced a desire to make his acquaintance, and who upon being introduced to him exclaimed: "Oh, Mr. Richardson, how you are like your work!"

"Now wasn't that a Dutch remark?" Richardson concluded the story.¹⁰² Indeed, the tact of the salutation must be admitted to have been somewhat Batavian, but it was not without critical value. One cannot conceive of Richardson's work as having been done by an anæmic architect, or by a self-distrustful architect, or by a professor of architecture, faithful as his own professional preparation had been. There is a distinction well recognized in the art to which architecture has more or less plausibly been likened that is no less valid as applied to architecture itself—the distinction between "school music" and "bravura music." If we adopt this distinction, Richardson must be classed among the bravura performers in architecture, who are eligible rather for admiration than for study. Assuredly designers will get nothing but good from his work if they learn from it to try for largeness and simplicity, to avoid niggling, and to consider first of all the disposition of their masses. But these are merits that cannot be transferred from a photograph. They are quite independent of a fondness for the Provençal Romanesque, and still more of an exaggeration of the depth of voussairs and of the dwarfishness of pillars. These things are readily enough imitable, as nearly every block of dwellings in Chicago testifies, but they are scarcely worth imitating. In Richardson's best work there is apt to be some questionable detail, since the success or failure of his building is commonly decided before the consideration of detail arises, and it is this questionable detail that the imitators are apt to reproduce without asking it any questions. Moreover, it will probably be agreed by most students that Richardson's city houses are, upon the whole, and in spite of some noteworthy exceptions, the least successful of his works. As it happens, there are two of them in Chicago itself, one on the north side and one on the south,¹⁰³ and if their author had done nothing else, it is likely that they would be accepted rather as warnings than as examples. The principal front of the former has the simple leading motive that one seldom fails to find in the work of its architect, in the central open loggia of each of its three stories, flanked on each side by an abutment of solid wall, and the apportionment of the front between voids and solids is just and felicitous [Fig. 58]. Three loggias seem an excessive allowance for the town-house of a single family;

¹⁰² Reference to Richardson's immense girth.

¹⁰³ On the north side: Franklin MacVeagh house, Schiller St. and Lake Shore Dr. (1885-1887; demolished). On the south side: J. J. Glessner house, SW cor. of S. Prairie Ave. and E. 18th St. (1885-1887; extant).

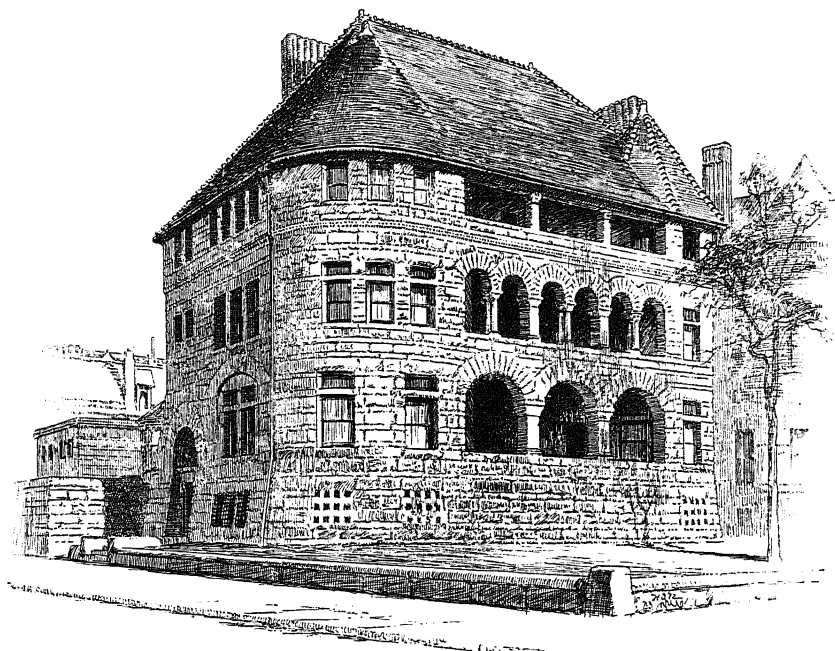


Fig. 58. Henry Hobson Richardson. Franklin MacVeagh house,
Chicago, 1885-1887.

but if we waive this point as an affair between the architect and his client exclusively, it must be owned that the arrangement supplies a motive susceptible of very effective development. In this case it cannot be said to have been developed effectively; nay, it can hardly be said to have been developed in an architectural sense at all, and the result proves that though a skilful disposition of masses is much, it is not everything. We have just been saying that the success or failure of Richardson's work was in a great degree independent of the merit of the detail, but this dwelling scarcely exhibits any detail. This is the more a drawback because the loggia is a feature of which lightness and openness is the essential characteristic, and which seems, therefore, to demand a certain elegance of treatment, as was recognized alike by the architects of the Gothic and the Renaissance palaces in Italy, from which we derive the feature and the name. It is, indeed, in the contrast between the lightened and enriched fenestration of the centre and the massiveness of the flanking walls that the potential effectiveness of the

arrangement resides. Here, however, there is no lightening and no enrichment. Rude vigor characterizes as much the enclosed arcades as the enclosing walls, and becomes as much the predominant expression of the front of a dwelling of moderate dimensions as of the huge façades of the Field warehouse. Such modelling as is introduced tends rather to enforce than to mitigate this expression, for the piers of the lower arcade are squared, and the intercalated shafts of the upper are doubled perpendicularly to the front, as are the shafts of the colonnade above, so as to lay an additional stress upon the thickness of a wall that is here manifestly a mere screen. The continuation of the abacus of the arcade through the wall and its reappearance as the transom of the flanking windows is an effective device that loses some of its effectiveness from its introduction into both arcades. It scarcely modifies the impression the front makes of lacking detail altogether. The double-dentilled string course that marks off and corbels out the attic is virtually the only moulding the front shows. Yet the need of mouldings is not less now than it was in the remote antiquity when a forgotten Egyptian artist perceived the necessity of some expedient to subdivide a wall, to mark a level, to sharpen or to soften a transition. For three thousand years his successors have agreed with him, and for a modern architect to abjure the use of these devices is to deny himself the rhetoric of his art. The incompleteness that comes of this abjuration in the present instance must be apparent to the least-trained layman, who vaguely feels that "something is the matter" with the building thus deprived of a source of expression, for which the texture given to the whole front by the exhibition of the bonding of the masonry, skilful and successful as this is in itself, by no means compensates. The sensitive architect must yearn to set the stone-cutters at work anew to bring out the expression of those parts that are especially in need of rhetorical exposition, to accentuate the sills of the arcades, to define and refine their arches, to emphasize the continuous line of the abacus, and especially to mark the summit of the sloping basement, which now is merged into the plane of the main wall, without the suggestion of a plinth. It is conceivable that an architect might, by the skilful employment of color, so treat a front, without the least projection or recess from top to bottom or from end to end, as to make us forget to deplore the absence of mouldings. Some interesting attempts in that direction have, in fact, been made, and complete success in such an attempt

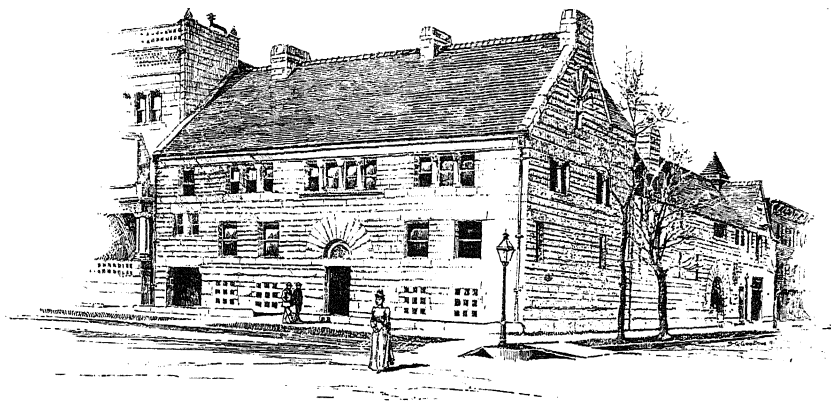


Fig. 59. Henry Hobson Richardson. J. J. Glessner house,
Chicago, 1885-1887.

would be entitled to the praise of a *tour de force*. But when in a monochromatic wall the designer omits the members that should express and emphasize and adorn his structural dispositions without offering any substitute for them, his building will appear, as this dwelling appears, a work merely "blocked out" and left unfinished; and if it be the work of a highly endowed and highly accomplished designer like Richardson, the deficiency must be set down merely as an unlucky caprice. We have been speaking exclusively of the longer front, since it is manifest that the shorter shares its incompleteness, without the partial compensation of a strong and striking composition, which would carry off much unsuccessful detail, though it is not strong enough to carry off the lack of detail, even with the powerful and simple roof that covers the whole—in itself an admirable and entirely satisfactory piece of work.

Capriciousness may with as much justice be charged upon the only example of Richardson's domestic architecture in Chicago, which, even more than the house we have been considering, arrests attention and prevents apathy, but which also seems even more from the purpose of domestic architecture [Fig. 59]. Upon the longer though less conspicuous front it lacks any central and controlling motive; and on the shorter and more conspicuous, this motive, about which the architect so seldom leaves the beholder in any doubt, is obscured by the addition at one end of a series of openings irrelevant to it, having no counterpart upon the other, and serving to weaken at a critical point the wall, the emphasis of whose massiveness and lateral expanse may be said to be

the whole purport of the design, to which everything else is quite ruthlessly sacrificed. For this the building is kept as low as possible, insomuch that the ridge of its rather steep roof only reaches the level of the third story of the adjoining house. For this the openings are diminished in size upon both sides, insomuch that they become mere orifices for the admission of light, and in number upon the long side, insomuch that the designer seems to regard them as annoying interruptions to his essay in the treatment of blank wall. A granite wall over a hundred and fifty feet long, as in the side of this dwelling, almost unbroken, and with its structure clearly exhibited, is sure enough to arrest and strike the beholder; and so is the shorter front, in which the same treatment prevails, with a little more of ungracious concession to practical needs in the more numerous openings; but the beholder can scarcely accept the result as an eligible residence. The treatment is, even more strictly than in the house on the north side, an exposition of masonry. There is here, to be sure, some decorative detail in the filling of the head of the doorway and in the sill above it, but this detail is so minute, in the case of the egg-and-dart that adorns the sill, so microscopic, that it does not count at all in the general effect. A moulding that does count in the general effect, and that vindicates itself at the expense of the structural features not thus developed, is the main cornice, an emphatic and appropriate profile. In this building there seems to be a real attempt to supply the place of mouldings by modifications of the masonry, which in the other forms an unvaried reticulation over the whole surface. In this not only are the horizontal joints accentuated, and the vertical joints slurred so as to assist very greatly in the emphasis of length, but the courses that are structurally of unusual importance, the sills and lintels of the openings, are doubled in width, thus strongly belting the building at their several levels. Here again a device that needs only to be expressed in modelling to answer an artistic purpose fails to make up for the absence of modelling. The merits of the building as a building, however, are much effaced when it is considered as a dwelling, and the structure ceases to be defensible, except, indeed, in a military sense. The whole aspect of the exterior is so gloomy and forbidding and unhomelike that but for its neighborhood one would infer its purpose to be not domestic, but penal. Lovelace has assured us that "stone walls do not a prison make," but when a building consists as exclusively as possible of bare

stone walls, it irresistibly suggests a place of involuntary seclusion, even though minds especially "innocent and quiet" might take it for a hermitage. Indeed, if one were to take it for a dwelling expressive of the character of its inmates, he must suppose it to be the abode of a recluse or of a misanthrope, though when Timon¹⁰⁴ secures a large plot upon a fashionable avenue, and erects a costly building to show his aversion to the society of his kind, he exposes the sincerity of his misanthropical sentiments to suspicion. Assuming that the owner does not profess such sentiments, but is much like his fellow-citizens, the character of his abode must be referred to a whim on the part of his architect—a Titanic, or rather a Gargantuan freak. For there is at least nothing petty or puerile about the design of these houses. They bear an unmistakably strong and individual stamp, and failures as, upon the whole, they must be called, they really increase the admiration aroused by their author's successes for the power of design that can make even wilful error so interesting.

That romantic architecture is not inconsistent with the suggestion of a home, or with the conditions of a modern town-house, is shown, if it needed any showing, by a dwelling that adjoins the first of the Richardson houses, and that nobody who is familiar with Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt's house or with the Marquand houses in New York would need to be told was the work of Mr. Hunt [Fig. 60].¹⁰⁵ It recalls particularly the Vanderbilt house, being in the same monochrome of light gray, and repeating, though with a wide variation, some of the same features, especially the corbelled tourelle. This is here placed to much better advantage at a salient instead of a re-entrant angle; it is more happily proportioned; the corbelling, not continuous, but broken by the wall of the angle, is very cleverly managed, and the whole feature is as picturesque and spirited as it is unmistakably domestic in expression. The house does not exhibit the same profusion of sculptural ornament as the earlier work it recalls, nor is there so much of strictly architectural detail. By this comparison, indeed, one would be inclined to call this treatment severe; but it is prodigality itself in comparison with its neighbor. This latter comparison is especially

¹⁰⁴ This thicket of literary allusion refers successively to Lovelace, "To Althea from Prison," and Shakespeare, *Timon of Athens*.

¹⁰⁵ William Borden house, NW cor. Lake Shore Dr. and Bellevue Pl. (1884; demolished 1960) by Richard Morris Hunt. On the Vanderbilt and Marquand houses, see below, pp. 488-493 and p. 540n.

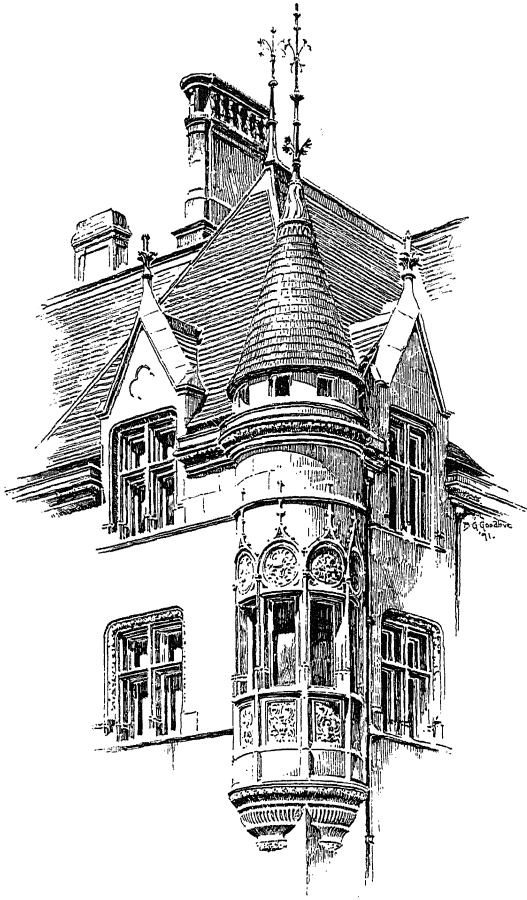


Fig. 60. Richard Morris Hunt. William Borden house,
Chicago, 1884.

instructive because in the block, as a matter of mere mass and outline, Mr. Richardson's composition, considerably simpler, is also pretty distinctly more forcible than that of Mr. Hunt, by reason of its central and dominating feature, and especially by reason of the completeness with which it is united by the simple and unbroken roof; whereas the criticism already passed upon the Vanderbilt house, that it grows weak above the cornice line, is applicable, though in a less degree, to its author's later work. The various roofs required by the substructure, and carried to the same height, have been imperfectly brought into

subjection, and their grouping does not make a single or a total impression. Taking the fronts by themselves, considering them with reference to the distribution of voids and solids, we must omit the minor front of Mr. Richardson's work as scarcely showing any composition; but the principal front is much more striking and memorable, doubtless, than either elevation of Mr. Hunt's design, carefully and successfully as both of them have been studied. Yet there is no question at all that the latter is by far the more admirable and effective example of domestic architecture, because the possibilities of expression that inhere in the masses are in the one case brought out, and left latent in the other.

Of course, Mr. Hunt's work is no more characteristically Chicagoan than Mr. Richardson's, and, of course, the dwellings we have been considering are too large and costly to be fairly representative of the domestic architecture of any city. The rule, to which there are as few exceptions in Chicago as elsewhere, is that architecture is regarded as a superfluity that only the rich can afford; whereas a genuine and general interest in it would require the man who was able to own a house at all to insist upon what the tailors call a "custom-made" dwelling, and would lead him equally to reject a ready-made residence and a misfit. In that case we should see in single houses of moderate size and moderate cost the same evidence of affectionate study as in houses of greater pretensions, even though the design might be evinced only in the careful and thoughtful proportioning and adjustment of the parts. This is still a sight as rare as it is welcome in any American city, though it is less rare in cities of the second and third class than in cities of the first. Chicago has its share, but no more than its share, of instances in which the single street front of a modest dwelling has been thought worthy of all the pains that could be given to it. Of one such instance in Chicago an illustration is given, and it is somewhat saddening to one who would like to find in it an evidence of intelligent lay interest in architecture to be informed that it is the residence of its architect [Fig. 61].

Upon the whole, the domestic architecture of the town has few local characteristics, besides those already mentioned, which are due to local conditions rather than to local preferences. The range of building material is wide, and includes a red sandstone from Lake Superior that has not yet made its way into the Eastern cities, of a more positive tint than any in general use there. On the other hand,

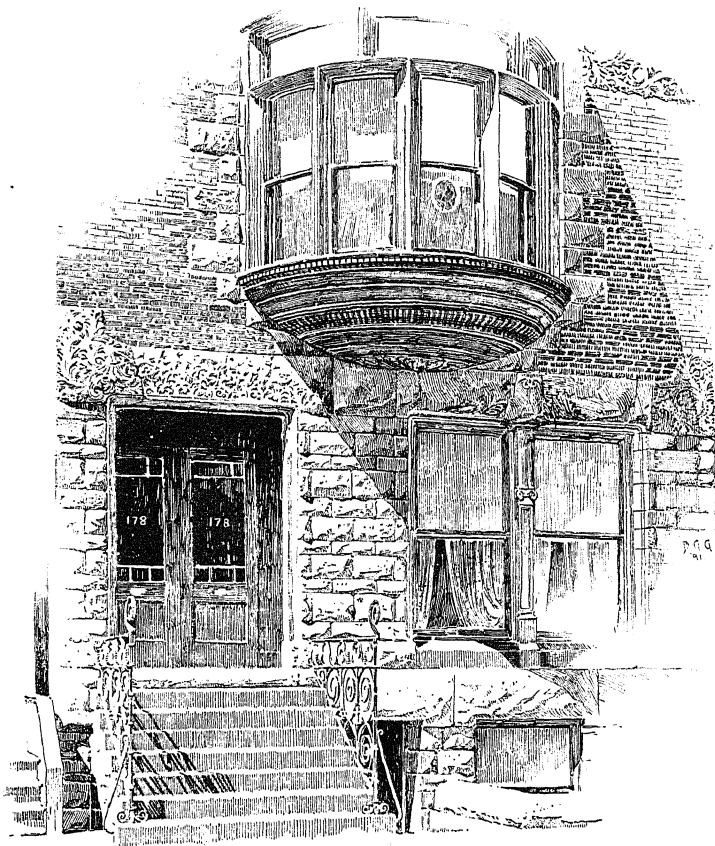


Fig. 61. John Addison. Front on Dearborn Ave., Chicago.

the whole continent has been laid under tribute for Chicago. The green "Chester serpentine" which one encounters so often in Philadelphia—and generally with regret, though in combination it may become very attractive—quite unknown in New York as it is, is not uncommon in the residential quarters of Chicago. Another material much commoner here than elsewhere is the unhewn boulder that Mr. Richardson employed in the fantastic lodge at North Easton, which was one of his happiest performances.¹⁰⁶ In a long and low structure like that the defects of the material are much less manifest than when

¹⁰⁶ Ames Gate Lodge, North Easton, Mass. (1880-1881; extant, the interesting interior renovated).

it is attempted to employ it in a design of several stories. One of the most interesting of these attempts is illustrated herewith [Fig. 62]. The architect has wisely simplified his design to the utmost to conform to the intractability of his material, and with equal wisdom has marked with strong belts the division of his stories. But in spite of its ruggedness the wall looks weak, since it is plain that there is no bonding, and that it is not properly a piece of masonry, but a layer of highly magnified concrete, which owes its stability only to the cohesion of the cement, and to give the assurance of being a trustworthy wall needs to be framed in a conspicuous quoining of unquestionable masonry.

One other trait is common enough among such of the dwellings of Chicago as have architectural pretensions to be remarked, and that is the prevalence of Byzantine carving. This is not really a Chicagoan characteristic. If it is especially noticeable here, it is because Chicago is so new, and it is in the newer quarters of older towns that it is to be seen. It is quite as general on the "West Side" of New York. Its prevalence is again in great part due to the influence of Richardson, and

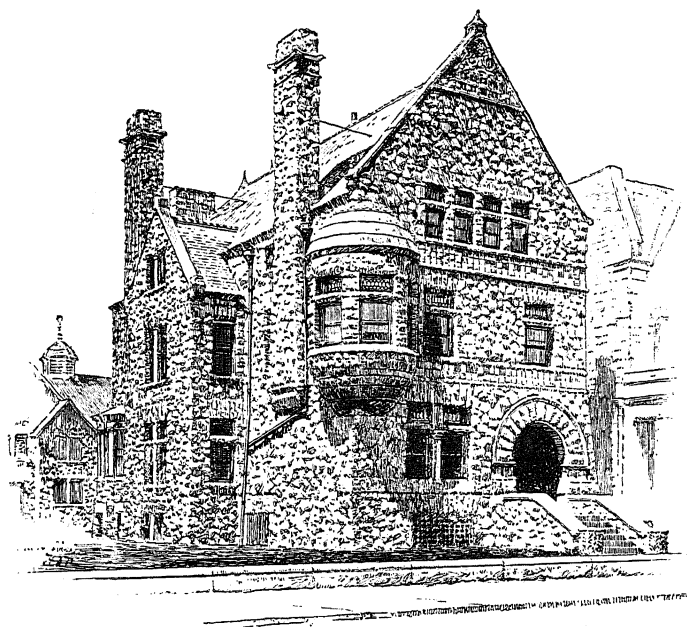


Fig. 62. Burnham & Root. A house of boulders, Chicago.

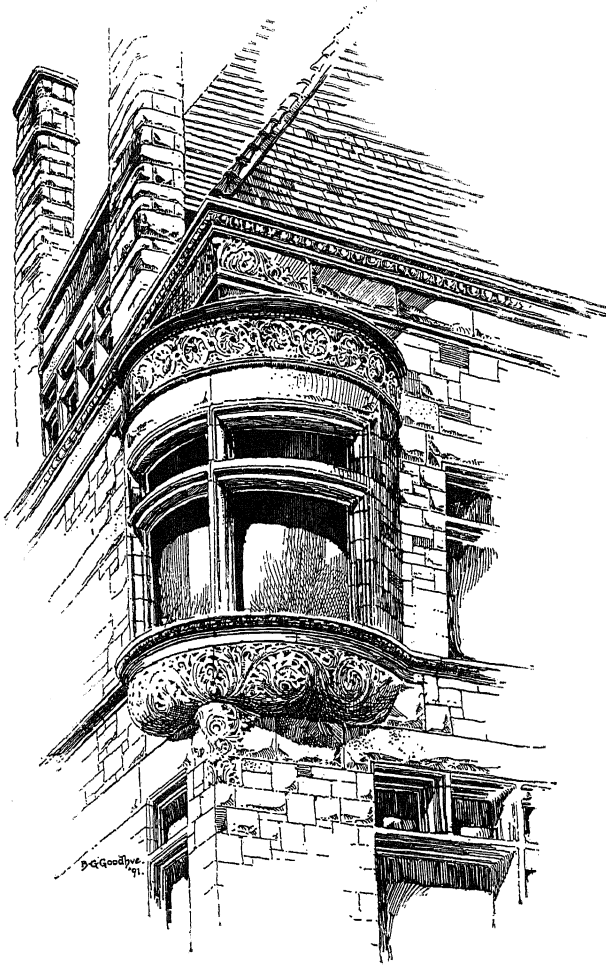


Fig. 63. Henry Ives Cobb. A Byzantine corbel, Chicago.

one is inclined to welcome it as at least tending to provide a common and understood way of working for architectural carvers, and the badge of something like a common style for buildings that have little else in common. The facility with which its spiky leafage can be used for surface decoration tempts designers to provide surfaces for its decoration, in such structural features as capitals and corbels, at the cost of the modelling which is so much more expressive and so much

more troublesome, when a mere cushion will do better as a basis for Byzantine ornament [Fig. 63].¹⁰⁷

For the rest, the clever and ingenious features which one often comes upon in the residential streets of Chicago, and the thoroughly studied fronts that one comes upon so much more seldom, would excite neither more nor less surprise if they were encountered in the streets of any older American town. But from what has been said it will be seen that in every department of building, except only the ecclesiastical, Chicago has already examples to show that should be of great value to its future growth in stimulating its architects to produce and in teaching its public to appreciate.

¹⁰⁷ One of the sources of Sullivan's ornament.

Glimpses of Western Architecture: St. Paul and Minneapolis¹⁰⁸

It is just thirty years since Anthony Trollope ascended the Mississippi to the head of navigation and the Falls of St. Anthony, and recorded his impressions of the works of nature and of man along the shores of that river. As might perhaps have been expected, he admired with enthusiasm the works of nature, and as might certainly have been expected, he found little to admire in the handiwork of man. "I protest that of all the river scenery that I know, that of the upper Mississippi is by far the finest and the most continued. One thinks, of course, of the Rhine; but, according to my idea of beauty, the Rhine is nothing to the upper Mississippi. . . . The idea constantly occurs that some point on every hill-side would form the most charming site ever yet chosen for a noble residence."¹⁰⁹ Thus Trollope of the upper Mississippi, and thus again of the "twin cities" that are the subject of our present inquisition: "St. Paul contains about 14,000 inhabitants, and, like all other American towns, is spread over a surface of ground adapted to the accommodation of a very extended population. As it is belted on one side by the river, and on the other by the bluffs which accompany the course of the river, the site is pretty, and almost romantic." The other "twin" is so much the later born that to few Minneapolitans does it ever occur that it had even seen the light in 1861. "Going on from Minnehaha, we came to Minneapolis, at which place there is a fine suspension-bridge across the river, just above the Falls of St. Anthony, and leading to the town of that name."¹¹⁰ Till I got there I

¹⁰⁸ *Harper's Magazine*, 83 (Oct. 1891), 736-755. Reprinted in *American Architecture*, pp. 168-211. Reproduced with all the original line cuts. Fig. 70 shifted from "Brooklyn Bridge" (1883-A).

¹⁰⁹ Anthony Trollope, *North America* (London, 1862), I, 210-220.

¹¹⁰ Minneapolis Suspension Bridge at Anthony Falls over the Mississippi (open 1855) by

could hardly believe that in these days there should be a living village called Minneapolis by living men. I presume I should describe it as a town, for it has a municipality and a post-office, and of course a large hotel. The interest of the place, however, is in the sawmills."

I do not mean to celebrate again the growth of St. Paul and Minneapolis from these small beginnings, which is the marvel of even the marvellous West. But for our immediate purpose it is necessary to bear in mind not only the rapidity of the growth of the two cities, but the intensity of the rivalry between them—a rivalry which the stranger hardly comprehends, however much he may have heard of it, until he has seen the workings of it on the spot. Indeed, it is scarcely accurate to describe the genesis of Minneapolis, in particular, as a growth at all. St. Paul has been developed from the frontier trading-post of the earlier days by an evolution, the successive stages of which have left their several records; but Minneapolis has risen like an exhalation, or, to adopt even a mustier comparison, has sprung from the heads of its projectors full-panoplied in brick and mortar. "The twin cities on either bank," remarks the historiographer of the Minneapolis Exposition of 1886, "amid many ups and downs—the ups always predominating—pegged along steadily towards greatness." The phrase is rather picturesque than graphic, for nothing could be less descriptive of the mode of locomotion of Minneapolis than a steady pegging along. It has been an affair of leaps and bounds. There are traces of the village that Trollope saw, and there are the towering structures of a modern city, and there is nothing between. In this electric air, where there is so little "precipitation" in the atmosphere and so much in everything else; where "the flux of mortal things" is not a generalization of the mind, but a palpable fact of daily experience; where antiquity means the day before yesterday, and posterity the day after to-morrow, the present is the most contemptible of tenses, and men inevitably come to think and live and build in the future-perfect. A ten-story building in a ten-acre lot requires explanation, and this seems to be the explanation—this and the adjacency of the hated rival. In St. Paul the elevator came as a needed factor in commercial architecture, since the strip of shore to which the town was confined

Thomas M. Griffith. Replaced by another suspension bridge (1877), also by Griffith, which was in turn superseded by a steel arch (1890). Griffith's bridge was the first to cross the Mississippi.

in Trollope's time still limits and cramps the business-quarter, and leaves only the vertical dimension available for expansion. Towering buildings are the normal outcome of such a situation. Minneapolis, on the other hand, occupies a table-land above the river, which at present is practically unlimited. Although, of course, every growing or grown town must have a most frequented part—a centre where land is costlier than elsewhere, and buildings rise higher—the altitude of the newest and tallest structures of Minneapolis could scarcely be explained without reference to the nearness of St. Paul, and the intensity of the local pride born of that nearness. If the physical necessities of the case prescribed ten-story buildings in St. Paul, the moral necessity of not being outdone would prescribe twelve-story buildings for Minneapolis. In point of fact, it is to a Minneapolitan architect that we owe the first project of an office building which bears the same relation to the ordinary elevator building of our cities that this bears to the five- or six-story edifice that the topographical and commercial conditions would indicate as suited to the actual needs of Minneapolis.¹¹¹ The project remains on paper, though it is some years since it startled the architects of the country, and an interesting project it is in an architectural sense; but it is none the less representative of the local genius than if it had been executed.

Evidently there could be no better places than the twin cities to study the development of Western architecture, or rather to ascertain whether there is any such thing. There seems to be among the Western lay populations a faith that there is, which is none the less firm for being a trifle vague, and this faith is shared by some of the practitioners of architecture in the West. In the inscrutable workings of our official architecture, one of these gentlemen came to be appointed a few years ago the supervising architect of the Treasury.¹¹² It is a measure of the extent and intelligence of the national interest in the art that this functionary, with little more than the official status of a clerk, and with no guarantee that he has any professional status whatever, has

¹¹¹ On this skyscraper project by Leroy S. Buffington, see below, p. 386n.

¹¹² The Supervising Architect with the "Western" ideas, who filled the post during the presidency of Chester A. Arthur, was Mifflin E. Bell (c. 1846-1904). His office was responsible for the Minneapolis Post Office mentioned below, also called the Old Federal Building, 3rd Ave. S. and Washington St., (1882-1889; extant) by Isaac Hodgson (died 1909), who was succeeded by E. P. Bassford (1837-1912). Schuyler returned to the Bell regime as the nadir of the Office of the Supervising Architect in "Federal Buildings" (1910-C).

little less than the ædiliary powers of an Augustus. To have found a city of brick and to have left a city of marble is a boast that more than one supervising architect could have paraphrased in declaring that he found the government architecture Renaissance and he left it Gothic, or that he found it Gothic and he left it nondescript, while each successive incumbent could have declared that he found it and left it without architectural traditions and without architectural restraints. The ambition of the architect immediately in question was not sectarian so much as sectional. To him it seemed that a bureau had too many traditions which to other students seemed to have none at all. Not personally addicted to swearing to the words of any master, he considered that the influence of authority in his office was much too strong. He was himself from the remote West, and in an interview setting forth his hopes and purposes, shortly after he came into the office from which he was shortly to go out, he explained that "Eastern" conventionalities had had altogether too much sway in the previous conduct of the office, and that he meant to embody "Western ideas" in the public buildings. In the brief interval before his retirement he designed many monuments from which one should be able to derive some notion of Western architectural ideas, and one of these is the government building in Minneapolis. This edifice is mainly remarkable for the multitude of ill-assorted and unadjusted features which it exhibits, especially for the "grand choice" of pediments which its fronts present—pediments triangular and curved, pediments closed and broken—and for the variety and multiplicity of the cupolas and lanterns and crestings by which the sky-line is animated into violent agitation. The features themselves cannot be "Western," since they are by no means novel, the most recent of them dating back to Sir Christopher Wren, and it must be the combination or the remarkable profusion of "things" that constitutes the novelty and the Westernness which it was the mission of the author to introduce into our public architecture. Unfortunately there is nothing that can fairly be called combination, for the composition is but an agglomeration, "a fortuitous concourse of atoms." We have all seen in the Eastern cities too many buildings of which crudity and recklessness were the characteristics, and which were unstudied accumulations of familiar forms, to assume that crudity and recklessness in architecture are especially "Western ideas." If they be so, then assuredly "Western"

is an opprobrious epithet, not lightly and unadvisedly to be applied to any structure.

There is perhaps no other building in either city equally costly and conspicuous which merits it in the same degree with the government building at Minneapolis, at least in an architectural sense. An enterprising owner in the same city has procured the materials for a new building by permitting each contributor to inscribe his contribution with the name of the material furnished by him, and a statement of its good qualities, and these incised advertisements undoubtedly give a local color to the structure; but this Westernness is scarcely architectural. The City Hall and Court House in St. Paul is a large and conspicuous building,¹¹³ the more conspicuous for being isolated in the midst of an open square; and it is unfortunate in design, or the absence of it, the arrangement of its voids and solids being quite unstudied and casual, and the aggregation quite failing to constitute a whole. There are by no means so many features in it as in the government building at Minneapolis, nor are they classic; but the architect has introduced more "things" than he was able to handle, and they are equally irrelevant to the pile and to each other, especially the tower that was intended to be the culminating feature of the composition, but which fails to fulfil its purpose from any point of view, crowning as it does a recessed angle of the front. This also is a congeries of unrelated and unadjusted parts, and, in the light of the illustrations of his meaning furnished by our official spokesman, this also may be admitted to be characteristically W—n. The same admission may reluctantly be made concerning the Chamber of Commerce in St. Paul,¹¹⁴ which consists architecturally of two very busy and bustling fronts, compiled of "features" that do not make up a physiognomy, and which stand upon a massive sash frame of plate-glass. As a matter of fact, these things have their counterparts in the East, only there they are not referred to the geography, but to the illiteracy or insensibility of the designer, and this classification seems simpler, and, upon the whole, more satisfactory.

Minneapolis has a compensation for its newness in the fact that

¹¹³ St. Paul City Hall and Court House, Wabash between 4th and 5th Sts., (completed 1889; demolished 1933) by E. P. Bassford.

¹¹⁴ St. Paul Chamber of Commerce Building, SW cor. Robert and 6th Sts. (1885-1886; gutted by fire 1930 and demolished); architect unknown.

when its public buildings came to be projected, the fashion of such edifices as these had passed away. If the work of Mr. Richardson has been much misunderstood, as I tried to point out in speaking of the domestic architecture of Chicago, if its accidents have been mistaken by admiring disciples for its essence, even if its essential and admirable qualities do not always suffice to make it available as a model, it is necessary only to consider such buildings as have just been mentioned to perceive how beneficial, upon the whole, his influence has been, for it has at least sufficed to make such buildings impossible—impossible, at least, to be done by architects who have any pretensions to be “in the movement”—and it is hard to conceive that they can be succeeded by anything so bad. The City Hall of Minneapolis, for instance, was projected but a few years later than its government building, but in the interval Richardson’s influence had been at work.¹¹⁵ That influence is betrayed both in the accepted design now in course of execution and in the other competitive designs, and it has resulted in a specific resemblance to the public building at Pittsburgh,¹¹⁶ which its author professed his hope to make “a dignified pile of rocks.” The variations which the authors of the Minneapolis City Hall have introduced in the scheme they have reproduced in its general massing, and in its most conspicuous features are not all improvements. By the introduction of grouped openings into its solid shaft the tower of Pittsburgh is shorn of much of its power; nor can the substitution be commended in its upper stage of a modification of the motive employed by Richardson in Trinity, Boston, and derived by him from Salamanca,¹¹⁷ for the simpler treatment used in the prototype of this building as the culminating feature of a stark and lofty tower. The far greater elaboration of the corner pavilions of the principal fronts, also, though in part justified by the greater tractability of the material here employed, tends rather to confusion than to enrichment. On the other hand, the more subdued treatment of the curtain wall between the tower and the pavilions gives greater value and detachment to both, and is thus an advance upon the prototype; and the

¹¹⁵ Minneapolis City Hall, 5th St. bet. 3rd and 4th Aves. S., (begun 1888; cornerstone 1891; formally opened only in 1905 with some interiors incomplete even at this late date; extant) by (Franklin Bidwell) Long (1842–1912) & (Frederick) Kees (1852–1927).

¹¹⁶ Allegheny Court House and Jail by H. H. Richardson; see above, p. 9n.

¹¹⁷ On the influence of the Romanesque tower of Salamanca Cathedral on Richardson’s Trinity Church, Boston, see above, p. 198n.



Fig. 64. Long & Kees. Minneapolis Public Library,
Minneapolis, Minn., completed 1889.

central gable of the subordinate front is distinctly more successful than the corresponding feature of Pittsburgh, the archway, withdrawn between two protecting towers, of which the suggestion comes from mediæval military architecture. Observe, however, that the derivation of the general scheme of the building and of its chief features from an earlier work is by no means an impeachment of the architect's originality, provided the precedent he chooses be really applicable to his problem, and provided he analyze it instead of reproducing it without analysis. In what else does progress consist than in availing one's self of the labor of one's predecessors? If the Grecian builders had felt the pressure of the modern demand for novelty, and had endeavored to comply with it by making dispositions radically new, instead of refining upon the details of an accepted type, or if the mediæval builders had done the same thing, it is manifest that the typical temple or the typical cathedral would never have come to be built, that we should have had no Parthenon and no Cologne. The requirements of the Minneapolis building, a court-house and town-hall, are nearly enough alike to those of the county building at Pittsburgh to make it credible that the general scheme of the earlier work may, by force of merit, have imposed itself upon the architect of the later. The general difference of treatment is the greater richness and elaboration of the

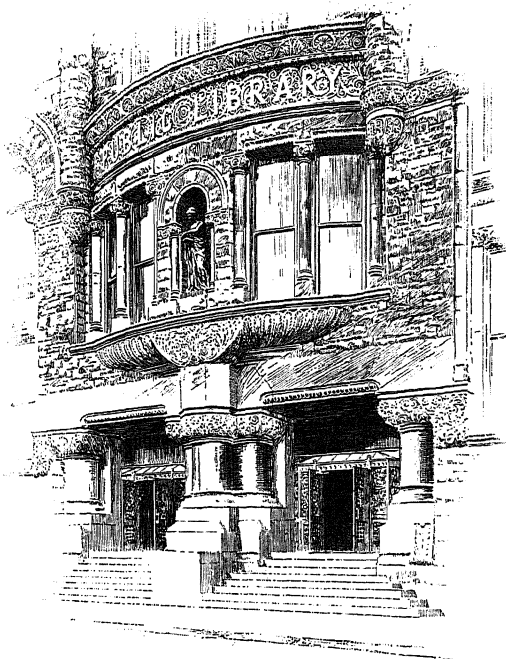


Fig. 65. Entrance, Minneapolis Public Library.

newer structure, and this is a legitimate consequence of the substitution of freestone for granite; while the differences of detail and the introduction at Minneapolis of features that have no counterpart at Pittsburgh suffice to vindicate the designer from the reproach of having followed his model thoughtlessly or with servility. So far as can be judged from the drawings, the municipal building of Minneapolis, when it comes to be finished, will be a monument of which the Minneapolitans will have a right to be proud, for better reasons than mere magnitude and costliness.

Another work, this time completely executed, by the designers of the City Hall, the Public Library of Minneapolis, betrays also the influence of Richardson [Fig. 64].¹¹⁸ The motive of the principal front, an arcade bounded by round towers and surmounted by a story of blank wall, was pretty evidently suggested by his unexecuted design;

¹¹⁸ Minneapolis Public Library, 1001 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis, Minn., (opened 1889 extant but no longer in use) by Long & Kees. With respect to the source of the design in Richardson's unexecuted project for the Buffalo Public Library, see above, pp. 210f and note 32.

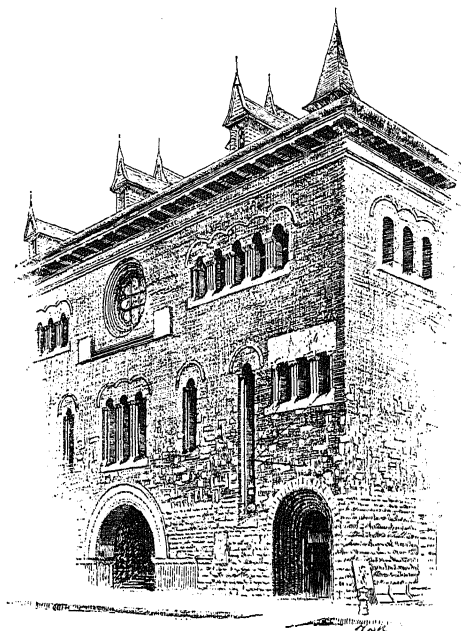


Fig. 66. J. W. Stevens. People's Church, St. Paul, Minn.,
c. 1889.

for a similar building at Buffalo. The precedent here is perhaps not so directly in point, seeing that the effectiveness of an arcade increases with its length, and in a much greater ratio, and that the arcade here is not only much shorter than in the projected building, but is still further shortened to the eye by being heightened and carried through two stories. The towers, too, would have been more effective had it been practicable to give greater solidity to their lower stages. Nevertheless, the building is distinctly successful, and its most successful feature, the gabled centre that includes the entrance, is one which illustrates the inventiveness of the designers, as well as their power of judicious selection and modification. [Fig. 65.]

As was remarked in the paper on Chicago, the architectural activity of the West is not largely ecclesiastical, and the churches are for the most part as near to traditional models as their designers have the knowledge to bring them. In the Eastern States a great many interesting essays have been made towards solving the modern problem of a church in which the pulpit and not the altar is the central point of

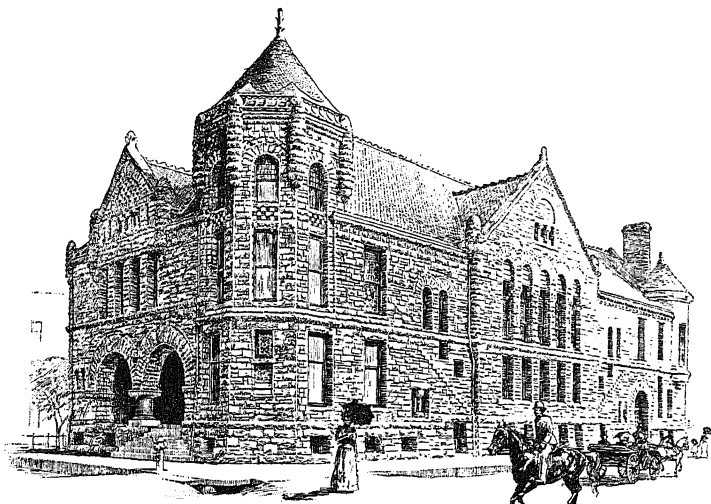


Fig. 67. Leroy S. Buffington. Unitarian Church, Minneapolis,
1885-1887.

design, while yet retaining an ecclesiastical expression. There is an edifice in St. Paul called "the People's Church," in which the designer seems purposely to have avoided an ecclesiastical expression, and to have undertaken to typify in brick and stone the wild, free theology of the West [Fig. 66].¹¹⁹ He has so far succeeded that nobody could possibly take the result of his labors for a church in the usual acceptance of the term, but this negative attainment does not yet constitute a positive architectural success. It may be that Western ideas in theology are thus far somewhat too sketchy to form a basis for the establishment of an architectural type, since mere negation is insusceptible of architectural expression. The People's Church does not lack, however, many of the qualities that should belong to every building as a building, apart from its destination. In spite of such unhappy freaks as that by which the stone basement merges into the brick superstructure with no architectural mark of the transition, and cuts the openings quite at random, or as that by which the brick wall, for a considerable but indefinite extent, is quite promiscuously aspersed with irregular bits of stone, it shows a considerable skill in the placing and detailing of features, and the disposition of the openings gives the

¹¹⁹ People's Church, 235 Pleasant Ave., St. Paul, Minn., (c. 1889; destroyed by fire 1940) by John Walter Stevens (1857-1937).

principal front a grateful sense of stability and repose. The ample entrances designate it as a place of popular assembly, and possibly its religious purpose may be taken to be confessed, though somewhat shamefacedly, in the wheel-window at the centre of one front, and the tall traceried opening at the centre of the other, which are the only relics of ecclesiastical architecture that are suffered to appear. It is evident that it is a "People's" something, and possibly this is as near to a specification of its purpose as the neo-theologians have attained. In this case, as it is notoriously difficult for a man to give expression to an idea of which he is not possessed, the architectural ambiguity is assuredly not to be imputed to the architect.

A Unitarian church in Minneapolis¹²⁰ is also an unconventional specimen of church architecture, though it could not be taken for anything but a church, and it is undeniably a vigorous performance, consisting of massive, well-divided, and "well-punched" walls in a monochrome of dark-red sandstone [Fig. 67]. The novelty and the unconventionality, however, seem, both in composition and in detail, to have been sought rather than to have proceeded from the conditions of the problem, and the effect is so far marred by the loss of the naturalness and straightforwardness that justify a departure from convention. For example, even in a galleried church the division into two stories can scarcely be considered the primary fact of the building, though this division is the primary fact of this design, and is emphasized by the torus that is the most conspicuous moulding. Nevertheless, there is much felicity in the general disposition and in the design of the features, especially in the open fenestration of the transept gable, and its strong contrast with the solider flanks of wall pierced only by the smaller openings that indicate the gallery staircases, the slope of which is also expressed in the masonry of the wall itself; and the low polygonal tower effectually unites and dominates the two fronts. The innovation in the treatment of detail, by which what is commonly the "wrought work" of a building in facile sandstone is left rough-faced, is a caprice that seems also to proceed from the pursuit of novelty, and that gains nothing in vigor for what it loses in refinement. A rough-faced moulding seems to be a contradiction in terms; yet here not only are the mouldings rough-faced, but also the columns and colonnettes, and the

¹²⁰ Unitarian Church, 8th and LaSalle Sts., Minneapolis, Minn., (1885-1887; extant) by Leroy S. Buffington (1847-1931).

corbelled pinnacles that detach the tower and the gables, and it is only in the copings of these that the asperities of the sandstone are mitigated. Slovenliness is not vigor, and in the coarsening of this detail the designer, in spite of having produced a vigorous and interesting work, exposes himself to the critical amenity bestowed by Dryden upon Elkanah Settle, that "his style is boisterous and rough-hewn."

A more conventional and a quite unmistakable example of church building is a Presbyterian church in St. Paul,¹²¹ which follows the established ecclesiastical type, albeit with a recognition of the modern demand that a church shall be a good place in which to preach and to be preached to—a demand which here, as often elsewhere, is met by shortening the arms of the cruciform plan until the church is virtually limited to the crossing [Fig. 68]. It is no disparagement to the present design to say that in its general composition it seems to have been suggested by—and at any rate it suggests—an early and interesting work of Mr. Richardson's, a church in Springfield, Massachusetts, upon which it improves at some points, notably in the emphatic exposition of the masonic structure. At other points the variation is not so successful. The tower at Springfield, with its attached turret, the entrance arch at its base, and the broach spire with pinnacles detached over the squinches, is a very vigorous piece of design. In the corresponding feature at St. Paul, the relation between the two superposed open stages is not rhythmic or felicitous, though each in itself is well modelled, and the transition from the tower to the shingled spire, marked by shingled pinnacles without a parapet, is distinctly unfortunate. For all that, the church is a studied and scholarly performance.

In the material and materializing development of the West, it is not surprising that the chief object of local pride should not be the local church, but the local hotel. "Of course a large hotel" is now, as in Trollope's time, a necessary ingredient of a local "boom." In respect of architecture the large hotel of Minneapolis has a decided advantage over the large hotel of St. Paul. For the caravansary of the older town is an example of the kind of secular Victorian Gothic that was stimulated by the erection of Sir Gilbert Scott's Midland Hotel in London,

¹²¹ Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church, 217 MacKubin St., St. Paul, Minn., (completed 1888; extant) by Cass Gilbert (1859-1934) and James Knox Taylor (1857-1929). Modeled on Richardson's Church of the Unity, Springfield, Mass. (1866-1869; demolished 1961); ill. in Hitchcock, *Richardson*, plate 7.

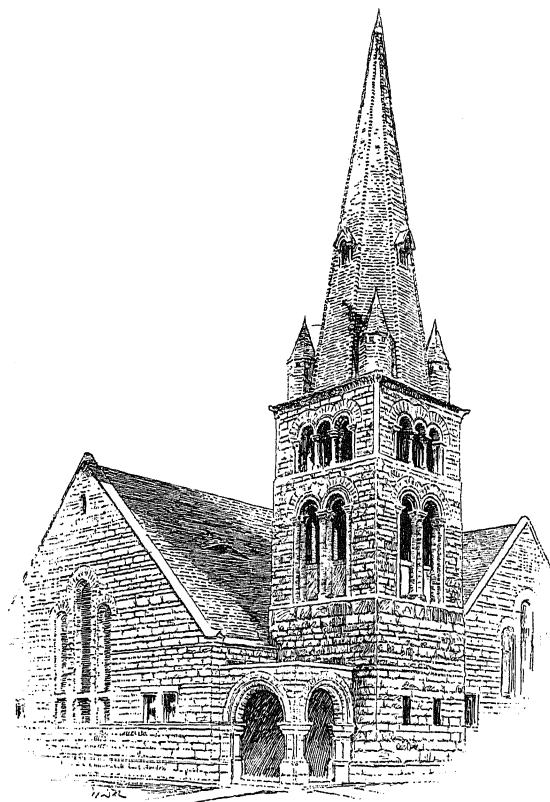


Fig. 68. Gilbert & Taylor.
Dayton Avenue Presbyterian
Church, St. Paul, completed
1888.

than which a less eligible model could scarcely be put before an untrained designer, since there is little in it to redeem an uneasy and uninteresting design except carefully studied and carefully adjusted detail.¹²² This careful study and adjustment being omitted, as they are in the Hotel Ryan, and a multiplicity of features retained and still further confused by a random introduction of color, the result is a bewildering and saltatory edifice which has nothing of interest except the banded piers of the basement. The West Hotel in Minneapolis is

¹²² Hotel Ryan, 6th and Robert Sts., St. Paul, Minn., (1885; extant) by J. J. Egan of Chicago. Its model, the Midland Hotel (1865-1876), London, was actually the front of St. Pancras Station. The competition for the hotel was held two years after the train sheds behind it had been begun. See Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, pp. 188f.

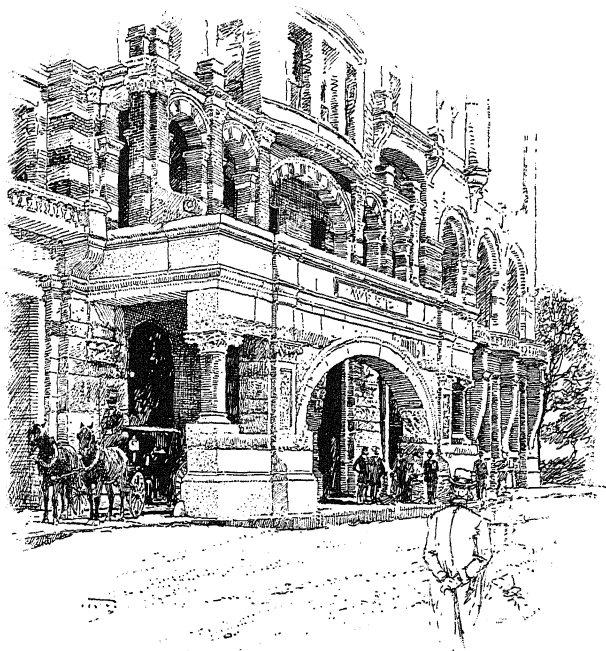


Fig. 69. Leroy S. Buffington. West Hotel, Minneapolis, completed 1883.

a much more considerable structure.¹²³ It has a general composition, both vertically and laterally, consisting in the former case of three divisions, of which the central is rather the most important, and in the latter of an emphasis of the centre and the ends in each front and of a subordination of the intervening wall. Here, also, there is a multiplicity of features, but they are not so numerous or distributed so much at random as to prevent us from seeing the countenance, for undeniably the building has a physiognomy, and that is in itself an attainment. In artistic quality the features are very various, and the one trait they seem to have in common is a disregard for academic correctness or for purity of style. This is conspicuous in the main entrance, which is perhaps the most effective and successful of them, being a massive and powerful porte-cochère, in which, however, an unmistakably Gothic dwarf column adjoins a panelled pilaster, which as unmistakably owes its origin to the Renaissance, and a like freedom of eclecticism may be observed throughout the building [Fig. 69]. In

¹²³ West Hotel, NW cor. 5th St. and Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis, Minn., (completed 1883; formally opened 1884; extant) by Leroy S. Buffington; ill. in E. M. Upjohn, "Buffington and the Skyscraper," *Art Bulletin*, 17 (Mar. 1935), opp. p. 50.

its degree this freedom may be Western, though a European architect would be apt to dismiss it indiscriminately as American; whereas an American architect would be more apt to ask himself, with respect to any particular manifestation of it, whether it was really, and not only conventionally, a solecism. In this place the conjunction does not strike one as incongruous, but there are other features in which the incongruity is real, such as the repeated projections of long and ugly corbels to support things that are pretty evidently there mainly for the purpose of being supported. The impregnable criticism of the Vicar of Wakefield, that the picture would have been better if the artist had taken more pains, is especially applicable to this edifice. It might have been both chastened and clarified by severer study; but it is a compliment to it, as American hotel architecture goes, to wish that it had been more carefully matured by its designer before being irretrievably executed. The interior presents several interesting points of design as well as of arrangement, but perhaps it owes its chief attractiveness to the rich and quiet decoration of those of its rooms that have been intrusted to Mr. Bradstreet,¹²⁴ who for many years has been acting as an evangelist of good taste to the two cities, and who for at least the earlier of those years must have felt that he was an evangelist *in partibus*. The interior design and decoration of the opera-house at Minneapolis is a yet more important illustration of his skill; but interiors are beyond our present scope.

For public works other than public buildings, the two cities are not as yet very notable. The site of St. Paul makes a bridge across the river at this point a very conspicuous object, and perhaps nowhere in the world would a noble and monumental bridge be more effective. The existing bridges, however, are works of the barest utility, apparently designed by railroad engineers with no thought of anything beyond efficiency and economy, and they are annoying interruptions to the panorama unrolled to the spectator from the hillside in the shining reach of the great river. Minneapolis has been more fortunate in this respect, although the river by no means plays so important a part in its landscape. The suspension-bridge of Trollope's time has, of course, long since disappeared, having been replaced by another, built in 1876 from the designs of Mr. Griffith, which was a highly picturesque object,¹²⁵ and was perhaps the most satisfactory solution yet attained,

¹²⁴ Probably John Scott Bradstreet (1845-1914), a prominent decorator of the city.

¹²⁵ See above, p. 292n.



Fig. 70. Thomas M. Griffith. Suspension bridge over the Mississippi at Anthony Falls, Minneapolis, completed 1855.

though by no means a completely satisfactory solution, of the artistic problem involved in the design of a suspension-bridge; a problem which to most designers of such bridges does not appear to be involved in it at all [Fig. 70].¹²⁶ It is very unfortunate that although the Minneapolitans appreciated this structure as one of their chief municipal ornaments, they should, nevertheless, have sacrificed it quite ruthlessly to the need of greater accommodation; whereas there could scarcely

¹²⁶ Schuyler cites Griffith's bridge as a model of the kind of towers which, in his opinion, would have improved the Brooklyn Bridge. See below, pp. 336f.

have been any insuperable difficulty in moving the site of the new bridge that the new exigencies demanded so that the old might be preserved. In another respect, Minneapolis has derived a great advantage from the capacity and the necessity of taking long views that are imposed upon her people by the conditions of their lives. This is the reservation, at the instigation of a few provident and public-spirited citizens, of the three lakes that lie in the segment of a circle a few miles inland from the existing city, and of the strip of land connecting them. Even now, with little improvement beyond road-making, the circuit of the future parks is a delightful drive;¹²⁷ and when Minneapolis shall have expanded until they constitute a bounding boulevard, the value of them as a municipal possession will be quite incalculable.

The aspect of the commercial quarters of the two cities has more points of difference than of resemblance. The differences proceed mainly from the fact already noted, that the commercial quarter of St. Paul is cramped as well as limited by the topography, and that it is all coming to be occupied by a serried mass of lofty buildings, whereas the lofty buildings of Minneapolis are still detached objects erected in anticipation of the pressure for room that has not yet begun to be felt. It is an odd illustration of the local rivalry that although the cities are so near together, the architects are confined to their respective fields, and it is very unusual, if not unexampled, that an architect of either is employed in the other. Such an employment would very likely be resented as incivism. Eastern architects are admitted on occasion as out of the competition, but in the main each city is built according to the plans of the local designers. The individual characteristics of the busiest and most successful architects are thus impressed upon the general appearance of the town, and go to widen the difference due to natural causes. The best examples of commercial architecture in Minneapolis, such as the Bank of Commerce and the Lumber Exchange, before its partial destruction by fire,¹²⁸ have the same straightforward and severely business-like character as the buildings designed by Mr. Root in Chicago, and, indeed, they seem to owe not

¹²⁷ The Minneapolis Park System is based on a plan of 1883 by the landscape architect Horace William Shaler Cleveland (1814-1900), who ended his professional career as director of the system. It became one of the cynosures of the nineteenth-century park movement. See Theodore Wirth, *History of the Minneapolis Park System* (Minneapolis, 1945).

¹²⁸ Bank of Commerce, 4th St. and 1st Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn., (erected 1888; extant) by Harry Wild Jones (1859-1935). Lumber Exchange, SE cor. 5th St. and Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis, Minn., (erected 1885; extant) by Long & Kees.

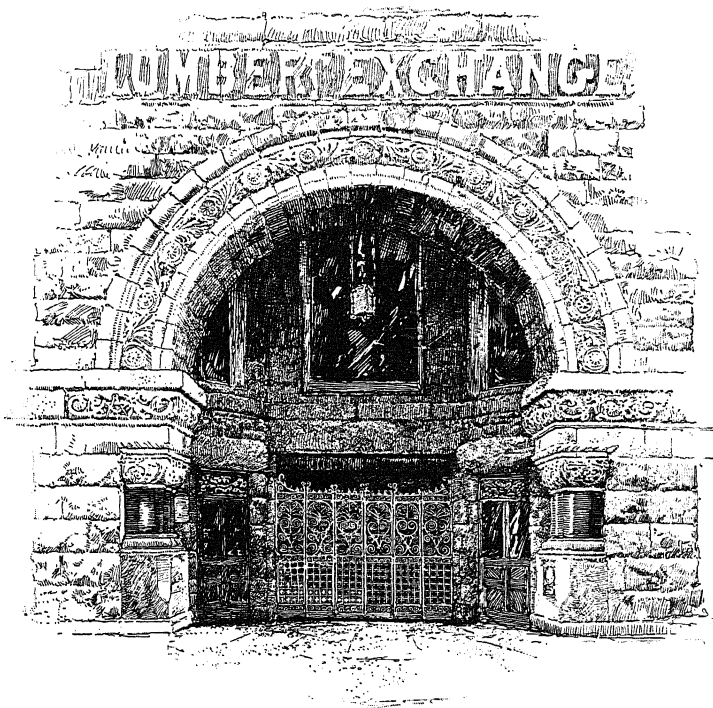


Fig. 71. Long & Kees. Lumber Exchange, Minneapolis,
completed 1885.

a little to suggestions derived from him. The treatment of the Lumber Exchange, in particular, indicates an admiring study of his work [Fig. 71]. Here the centre of the front is signalized by projecting shallow oriels carried through the five central stories of the building on each side of the ample opening in each story directly over the entrance, and by flanking this central bay in the upper division with narrow and solid turrets, corbelled and pinnacled. The scheme is not so effectively wrought out as it deserves to be, and as it might be. The central feature is not developed into predominance, and the main divisions of the building are no more emphasized in treatment than the divisions between the intermediate stories. The observer may recur to the Vicar of Wakefield to express his regret that the promise of so promising a scheme should not have been fulfilled, although, in spite of its shortcomings, the result is a respectable "business block." These

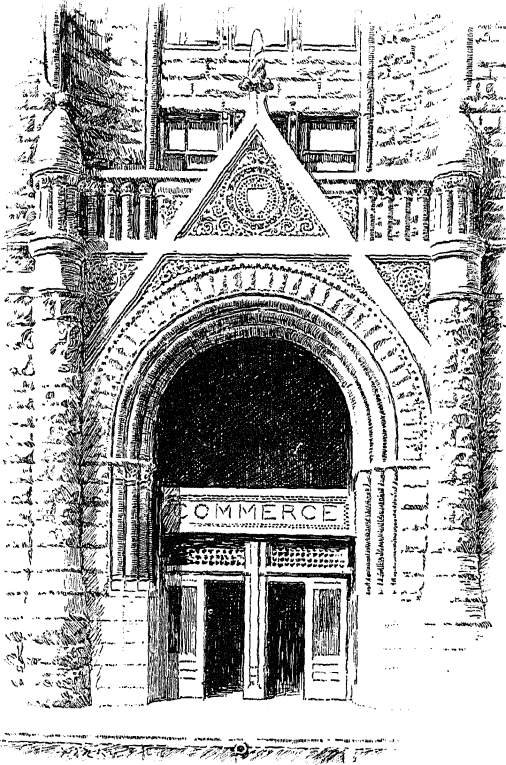


Fig. 72. Harry W. Jones. Entrance, Bank of Commerce, Minneapolis, completed 1888.

remarks apply to the original building, and not to the building as it has since been reconstructed by the addition of two stories which throw out the relations of its parts, and make it difficult to decipher the original scheme. The Bank of Commerce is as frankly utilitarian as the Lumber Exchange, the designer having relaxed the restraint imposed upon him by the prosaic and pedestrian character of his problem only in the design of the scholarly and rather ornate entrances [Fig. 72]. For the rest, the architecture is but the expression of the structure, which is expressed clearly and with vigor. The longer front shows the odd notion of emphasizing the centre by withdrawing it, a procedure apparently irrational, which has, however, the compensation of giving value and detachment to the entrance at its base. The problem was much more promising than that of the Lumber Exchange, seeing that here, with an ample area, there are but six

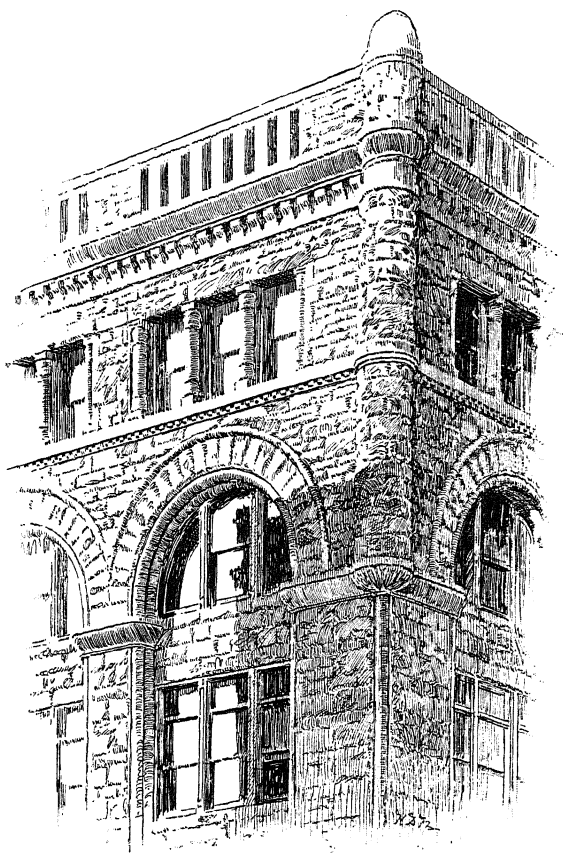


Fig. 73. Corner, Bank of Commerce.

stories against ten, and it is out of all comparison better solved. The four central stories are grouped by piers continued through them and connected by round arches above the fifth, while the first and sixth are sharply separated in treatment, the former as an unmistakable basement, with a plain segment-headed opening in each bay, and the latter as an unmistakable attic, with a triplet of lintelled and shafted openings aligned over each of the round arches [Fig. 73]. The fronts are, moreover, distinguished, without in the least compromising the utilitarian purpose of the structure, by the use of the architectural devices the lack of which one deplors in the other building, insomuch that the difference between the two is the difference between a building merely blocked out and a finished building, and suggests again that



Fig. 74. E. Townsend Mix. Globe Building, Minneapolis, completed 1891.

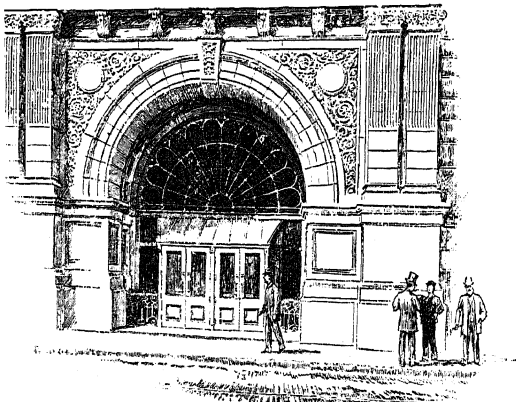


Fig. 75. S. S. Beman. Entrance, Pioneer Press Building, St. Paul, completed 1889.

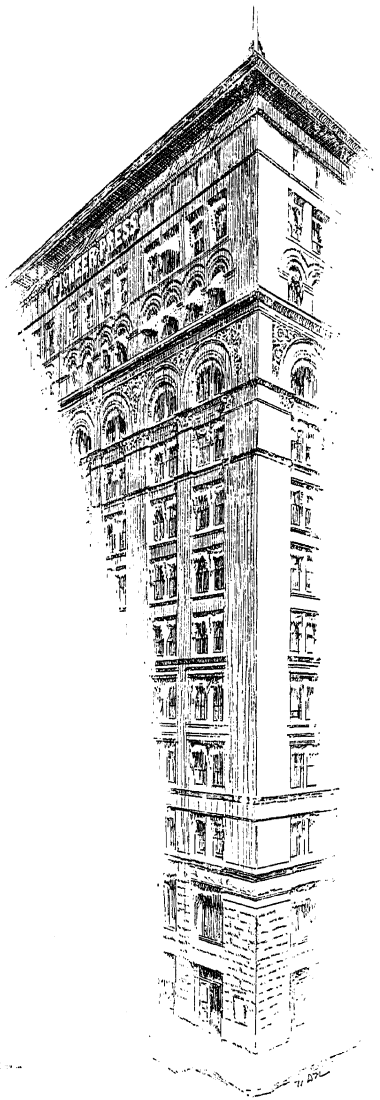


Fig. 76. Corner, Pioneer Press Building.

the Lumber Exchange must have been designed under pressure. The building of the "Globe" newspaper, in Minneapolis,¹²⁹ is a vigorous composition in Richardsonian Romanesque, excessively broken and diversified, doubtless, for its extent, but with interesting pieces of detail, and with a picturesque angle tower that comes in very happily from several points of view of the business quarter [Fig. 74]. The emphatic framing of this tower between two plain piers is a noteworthy point of design, and so is the use of the device that emphasizes the angles throughout their whole extent, while still keeping the vertical lines in subordination to the horizontal.

Among the business blocks of St. Paul, the building of the "Pioneer Press" newspaper is eminent for the strictness with which the design conforms itself to the utilitarian conditions of the structure,¹³⁰ and the impressiveness of the result attained, not in spite of those apparently forbidding conditions, but by means of them [Figs. 75, 76]. Here also Mr. Root's buildings, to which this praise belongs in so high a degree, have evidently enough inculcated their lesson upon the designer of the present structure. An uncompromising parallelopiped of brown brick rears itself to the height of twelve stories, with no break at all in its outline, and with no architecture that is not evolved directly from the requirements of the building. One does not seem to be praising a man very highly to praise him for talking prose when he has a prosaic subject. A mere incompetency to poetry would apparently suffice to earn this moderate eulogy. Yet, in fact, nothing is much rarer in our architecture than the power to deny one's self irrelevant beauties. The "Pioneer Press" building is a basement of three stories, the first story of the brick-work counting in with the two-story substructure of masonry, carrying a superstructure of seven, crowned with an attic of two. This latter feature proceeds, doubtless, from the special requirement of a newspaper office superposed upon a business block, and it may be inferred that to this requirement is due the greater enrichment of the lower of the two attic stories, contrary to the usual arrangement, and testifying the architect's belief, mistaken or not, that the editorial function is of more dignity and worthier of celebration than the typographical. At any rate, the unusual disposition is archi-

¹²⁹ Globe Building, 16-18 S. 4th St., Minneapolis, Minn., (erected 1891; extant) by Edward Townsend Mix (1831-1890).

¹³⁰ Pioneer Press Building, NE cor. 4th and Robert Sts., St. Paul, Minn., (completed 1889; extant) by Solon S. Beman of Chicago.

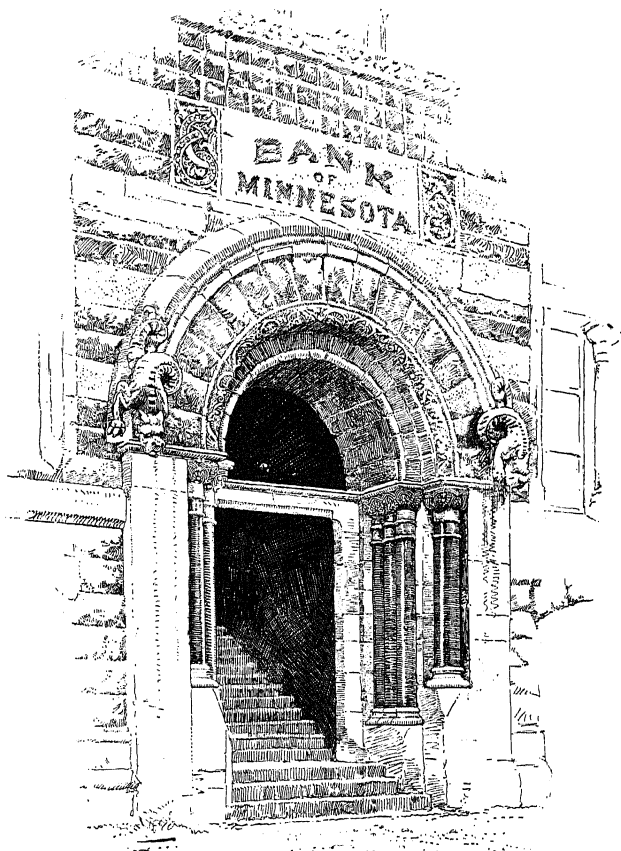


Fig. 77. Wilcox & Johnston. Bank of Minnesota, St. Paul,
completed 1887.

tecturally fortunate, since it provides, in the absolutely plain openings of what is presumably the composing-room, a grateful interval between the comparative richness of the arcades beneath and of the cornice above. In the main front, the ample entrance at the centre supplies a visible motive for the vertical as well as for the subordinate lateral division. It is developed through the three stories of the basement, and it is recognized in a prolongation upward of its flanking piers through the central division—which is completed by round arches, the spandrels of which are decorated—and through the attic, so as to effect a triple division for the front. The unostentatious devices are highly effective by which the monotony that would result from an

identical treatment of the seven central stories is relieved, while the impression made by the magnitude of such a mass is retained. The terminal piers are left entirely unbroken throughout all their extent, except for a continuous string course above the eighth story, which might better have been omitted, since it cuts the intermediate piers very awkwardly, and detracts from the value of the heavier string course only one story higher that has an evident reason of being, as the springing course of the arcade; while the intermediate piers are crossed by string courses above the fifth and the ninth stories, so as to give to the central and dominant feature of the main composition a triple division of its own into a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The building is very successful, and the more successful because the designer has shirked nothing and blinked nothing, but out of this nettle, commercial demands, has plucked this flower, commercial architecture. The same praise of an entire relevancy to its purpose belongs to the Bank of Minnesota,¹³¹ a well-proportioned and well-divided piece of masonry, in spite of more effort at variety in outline, and of somewhat more of fantasy in detail. The former is manifested in the treatment of the roof, in which the gables of the upper story are relieved against a low mansard; and the latter in the design of these gables and of the rich and effective entrance [Fig. 77]. The problem, as one of composition, is very much simplified here, since the building is but of six stories, and the dilemma of monotony or miscellany, which so awfully confronts the designers of ten- and twelve-story buildings, does not present itself. The two lower stories, though quite differently detailed, are here grouped into an architectural basement, the grouping being emphasized in the main front by the extension of the entrance through both. The superstructure is of three stories, quite identical and very plain in treatment, and above is the lighter and more open fenestration of the gabled attic.

Of far more extent and pretension than this, being indeed perhaps the costliest and most "important" of all the business block of St. Paul, is the building of the New York Life Insurance Company.¹³² In saying

¹³¹ Bank of Minnesota, 6th and Jackson Sts., St. Paul, Minn., (completed 1887; extant) by (William H.) Wilcox & (Clarence Howard) Johnston (1859-1936). Wilcox moved to Tacoma, Wash., in the nineties and seems to have disappeared.

¹³² New York Life Insurance Building, 395 Minnesota St., St. Paul, Minn., (1888-1889; extant) by the New York firm of (George F.) Babb, (Walter) Cook & Willard. Cook (1846-1916), who worked with various partners, was the notable partner and designer of the firm.

that the total impression of this edifice is one of picturesque quaintness, one seems to deny its typicalness, if not its appropriateness, as a housing and an expression of the local genius, for assuredly there is nothing quaint about the Western business man or his procedures during business hours, however quaint and even picturesque one may find him when relaxing into anecdote in his hours of ease. The building owes its quaintness in great part to the division of its superstructure into two unequal masses flanking a narrow court, at the base of which is the main entrance [Fig. 78]. The general arrangement is not uncommon in the business blocks of New York. The unequal division into masses, of which one is just twice as wide as the other, looks capricious in the present detached condition of the building; though when another lofty building abuts upon it, the inequality will be seen to be a sensible precaution to secure the effective lighting of the narrower mass, the light for the wider being secured by a street upon one side as well as by the court upon the other. Even so, this will not be so intuitively beheld as the fact of the inequality itself, and as the differences of treatment to which it gives rise and by which it is emphasized; for the quaintness resulting from the asymmetry is so far from being ungrateful to the designer that he has seized upon it with avidity, and developed it by all the means in his power. Quaintness is the word that everybody uses spontaneously to express the character of the Dutch and Flemish Renaissance, and the treatment of these unequal gables

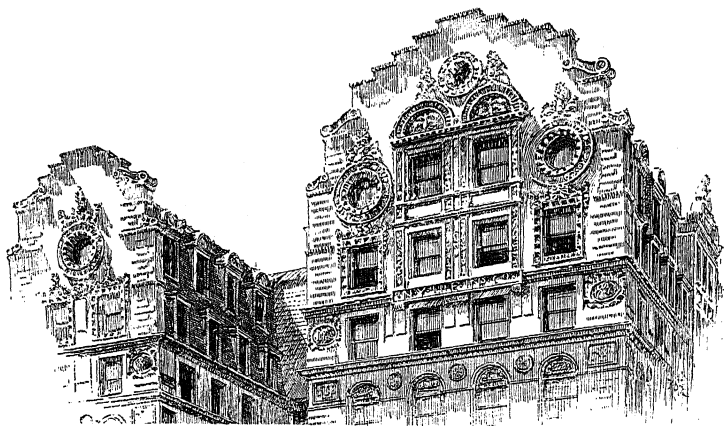


Fig. 78. Babb, Cook & Willard. New York Life Insurance Building,
St. Paul, 1888-1889.

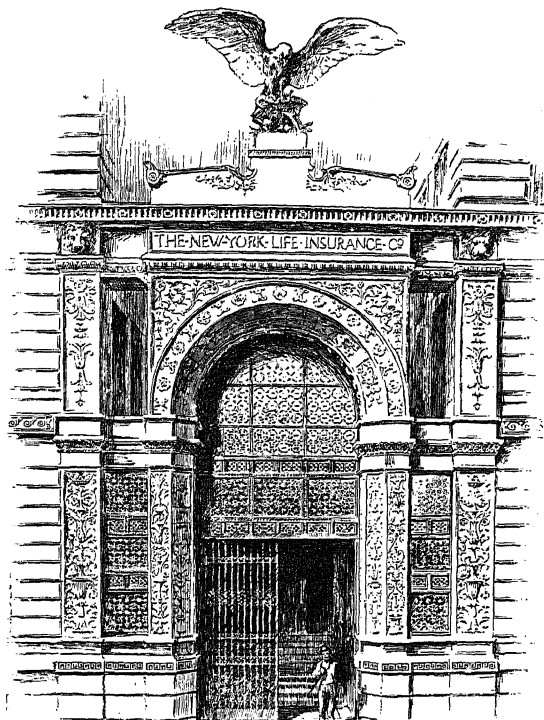


Fig. 79. Entrance, New York Life Insurance Building, St. Paul.

is obviously derived from Flemish examples. The origin of their crow steps and ailerons is unmistakable, and the treatment of the grouped and somewhat huddled openings, and their wreathed pediments and bull's-eyes, richly and heavily framed in terra cotta, is equally characteristic, to the point of being baroque. This character is quite evidently meant, and the picturesqueness that results from it is undeniable, and gives the building its prevailing expression; howbeit it is confined to the gables, the treatment of the substructure being as "architecturesque" as that of the superstructure is picturesque. A simple and massive basement of two stories in masonry carries the five stories of brick-work heavily quoined in stone that constitute the body of the building, and this is itself subdivided by slight but sufficient differences, the lower story being altogether of masonry, and the upper arcaded. An intermediate story, emphatically marked off above and below, separates this body from the two-story roof, the gables of which we

have been considering. The main entrance, which gives access to a stately and sumptuous corridor, seems itself extraneous to the building, having little congruity either with the straightforward and structural treatment of the main building, or with the bulbous picturesqueness of the gables [Fig. 79]. The care with which its detail is studied is evident, and also the elegance of the detail in its kind and in its place; but it does not seem to be in its place anywhere out-of-doors, and still less as applied to the entrance of a business block to which it is merely applied, and from which it is not developed. Its extreme delicacy, indeed, almost gives the impression that it is meant to be a still small voice of scholarly protest on the part of an "Eastern" architect against a "boisterous and rough-hewn" Westernness. A still smaller voice of protest seems to be emitted by the design of the Endicott Arcade,¹³³ the voice of one crying, very softly, in the wilderness. So ostentatiously discreet is the detail of this building, indeed, so minute the scale of it, and so studious the avoidance of anything like stress and the effort for understatement, that the very quietness of its remonstrance gives it the effect of vociferation.

He who in quest of quiet "Silence" hoots,
Is apt to make the hubbub he imputes. ¹³⁴

It seems to be an explicit expostulation, for example, with the architect of the Guaranty Loan Building in Minneapolis,¹³⁵ which has many striking details not without ingenuity, and certainly not without "enterprise," but as certainly without the refinement that comes of a studied and affectionate elaboration, insomuch that this also may be admitted to be W——n, and to invite the full force of Dryden's criticism. The building in the exterior of which this mild remonstrance is made has an interior feature that is noteworthy for other qualities than the avoidance of indiscretion and overstatement—the "arcade," so called, from which it takes its name—a broad corridor, sumptuous in material and treatment to the "palatial" point, one's admiration for which is not destroyed, though it is abated, by a consideration of its irrelevancy to a business block. The building of the New York Life in Minneapolis, by the same architects as the

¹³³ Endicott Arcade, 350 Robert St., St. Paul, Minn., (1888; extant) by Gilbert & Taylor.

¹³⁴ Reference unlocated.

¹³⁵ Guaranty Loan (now Metropolitan Life) Building, 120 S. 3rd St., Minneapolis, Minn., (1888-1890; extant) by Edward Townsend Mix.

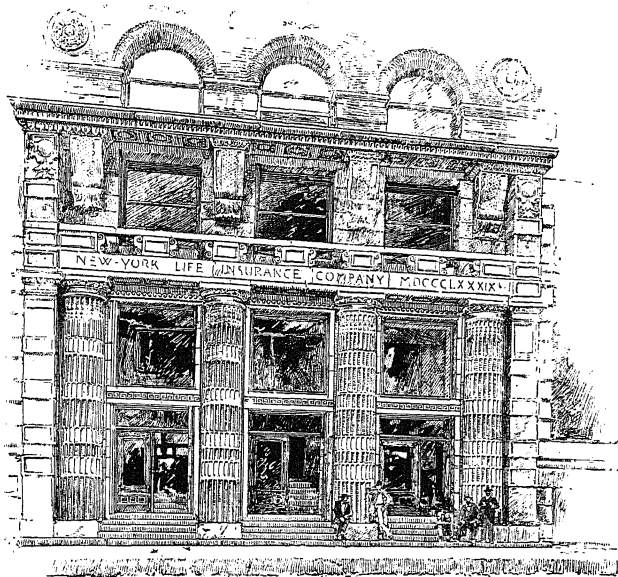


Fig. 80. Babb, Cook & Willard. New York Life Insurance Building, Minneapolis, 1888-1890.

building of the same corporation in St. Paul, is more readily recognizable by a New-Yorker as their work.¹³⁶ It is a much more commonplace and a much more utilitarian composition—a basement of four stories, of which two are in masonry, carrying a central division also of four and an attic of two, the superstructure being of brick-work. The two principal divisions are too nearly equal; nor does the change of material effected by building the two upper stories of the basement in brick-work achieve the rhythmic relation for the attainment of which it was doubtless introduced. But the structure is nevertheless a more satisfactory example of commercial architecture than the St. Paul building. Its entrance, of four fluted and banded columns of a very free Roman Doric, with the platform on consoles above, has strength and dignity, and is a feature that can evidently be freely exposed to the weather, and that is not incongruous as the portal of a great commercial building [Fig. 80]. A very noteworthy feature of the

¹³⁶ New York Life Insurance Building, 5th St. and 2nd Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn., (1888-1890; extant) by Babb, Cook & Willard.

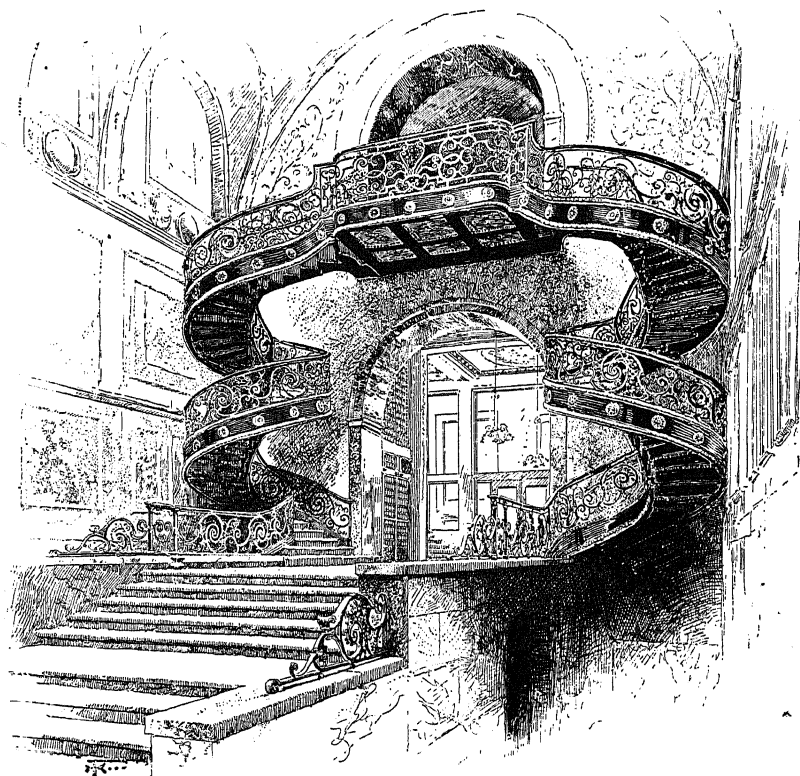


Fig. 81. Vestibule, New York Life Insurance Building, Minneapolis.

interior is the double spiral staircase in metal that has apparently been inspired by the famous rood screen of St. Étienne du Mont in Paris,¹³⁷ and that is a very taking and successful design, in which the treatment of the material is ingenious and characteristic [Fig. 81].

We have seen that the huddled condition of the business quarter of St. Paul, practically a disadvantage in comparison with the spaciousness of Minneapolis, has become architecturally a positive advantage. The natural advantages with respect to the quarters of residence seem to be strongly on the side of St. Paul. The river-front at Minneapolis is not available for house-building, nor is there any other topographical indication of a fashionable quarter, except what is furnished by the

¹³⁷ Rood screen, St. Étienne du Mont, Paris, (1601-1609) by Pierre Biare. Ills. in Yvan Christ, *Églises de Paris* (Paris, 1956), plates 79, 80, 81.

slight undulations of the plateau. The more pretentious houses are for the most part scattered, and, of course, much more isolated than the towering commercial buildings. On the other hand, the fashionable quarter of St. Paul is distinctly marked out by nature. It could not have been established anywhere but at the edge of the bluff overhanging the town and commanding the Mississippi. Surely this height must have been one of those eminences that struck the imagination of Trollope when they were yet unoccupied. And now the "noble residences" have come to crown the hillside, and really noble residences many of them are. There are perhaps as skilfully designed houses in the younger city, and certainly there are houses as costly; but there is nothing to be compared with the massing of the handsome houses of St. Paul upon the ridge above the river. Indeed, there are very few streets in the United States that give in as high a degree as Summit Avenue the sense of an expenditure liberal without ostentation, directed by skill, and restrained by taste. What mainly strikes a pilgrim from the East is not so much the merit of the best of these houses, as the fact that there are no bad ones; none, at least, so bad as to disturb the general impression of richness and refinement, and none that make the crude display of "new money" that is to be seen in the fashionable quarters of cities even richer and far older. The houses rise, to borrow one of Ruskin's eloquent phrases, "in fair fulfilment of domestic service and modesty of home seclusion."¹³⁸ The air of completeness, of finish, of "keeping," so rare in American towns, is here as marked as at Newport.¹³⁹ In the architecture there is a wide variety, which does not, however, suffice to destroy the homogeneousness of the total effect. Suggestions from the Romanesque perhaps prevail, and testify anew to the influence of Richardson, though there are suggestions from the Renaissance and from pointed architecture that show scholarship as well as invention [Figs. 82-88].¹⁴⁰ The cleverness and ingenuity of a porte-cochère of two pointed arches are not diminished by the likelihood that it was suggested by a canopied tomb in a cathedral. But, indeed, from whatever source the inspiration of the architects may

¹³⁸ Reference unlocated.

¹³⁹ Schuyler here refers to the Newport of the "stick" and "shingle" style, not the "palatial" Newport which was just being built as he wrote. See below, pp. 503f, and section by Scully in Downing and Scully, *Architectural Heritage of Newport*.

¹⁴⁰ Architects of houses illustrated by Schuyler not previously identified are (Charles T.) Mould & (Robert) McNichol, and Allen Hartzell Stem (1856-1931).



Fig. 82. Harry W. Jones. Dwelling in Minneapolis.

have come, it is everywhere plain that they have had no intention of presenting "examples" of historical architecture, and highly unlikely that they would be disturbed by the detection in their work of solecisms that were such merely from the academic point of view. It is scarcely worth while to go into specific criticism of their domestic work. To illustrate it is to show that the designers of the best of it are quite abreast of the architects of the older parts of the country, and that they are able to command an equal skill of craftsmanship in the execution of their designs.

This does not answer our question whether there is any such thing as Western architecture, or whether these papers should not rather have been entitled "Glimpses of Architecture in the West." The interest in this art throughout the West is at least as general as the interest in it throughout the East, and it is attested in the twin cities by the existence of a flourishing and enterprising periodical, the "Northwestern Architect,"¹⁴¹ to which I am glad to confess my obligations. It is natural that this interest, when joined to an intense local patriotism, should lead to a magnifying of the Westernness of such structures as are the subjects of local pride. It is common enough to hear the same local patriot who declaims to you in praise of Western architecture explain also that the specimens of it which he commends to your admiration are the work of architects of "Eastern" birth or

¹⁴¹ *Northwestern Architect and Building Budget* (Minneapolis, Chicago), 12 vols. from Nov. 10, 1882, to Dec. 1894.

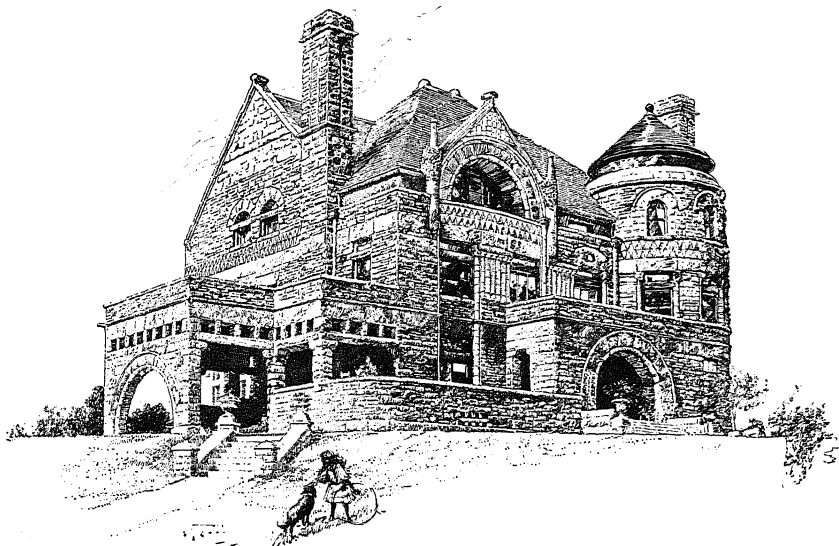


Fig. 83. Mould & McNichol. Dwelling in St. Paul.

training. Now, if not in Dickens's time, the "man of Boston raisin'" ¹⁴² is recognized in the West to have his uses. The question whether there is any American architecture is not yet so triumphantly answered that it is other than provincial to lay much stress on local differences. The general impression that the Eastern observer derives from Western architecture is the same that American architecture in general makes upon the European observer; and that is, that it is a very much emancipated architecture. Our architects are assuredly less trammelled by tradition than those of any older countries, and the architects of the West are even less trammelled than those of the East. Their characteristic buildings show this characteristic equally, whether they be good or bad. The towering commercial structures that are forced upon them by new conditions and facilities are very seldom specimens of any historical style; and the best and the worst of these, the most and the least studied, are apt to be equally hard to classify. To be emancipated is not a merit; and to judge whether or not it is an advantage, one needs to examine the performances in which the emancipation is exhibited. "That a good man be 'free,' as we call it," says Carlyle, in one of his most emphatic Jeremiads—"be permitted to unfold

¹⁴² Reference unlocated.

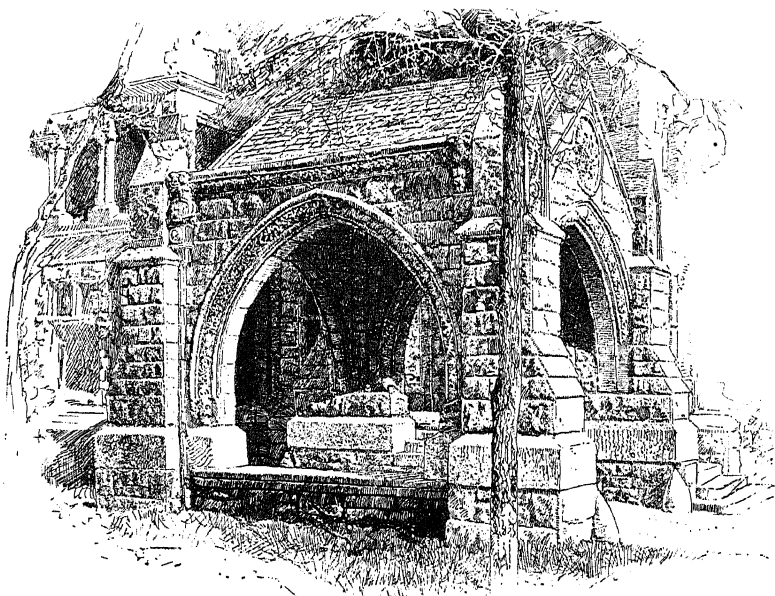


Fig. 84. Wilcox & Johnston. Porte-cochère, St. Paul.

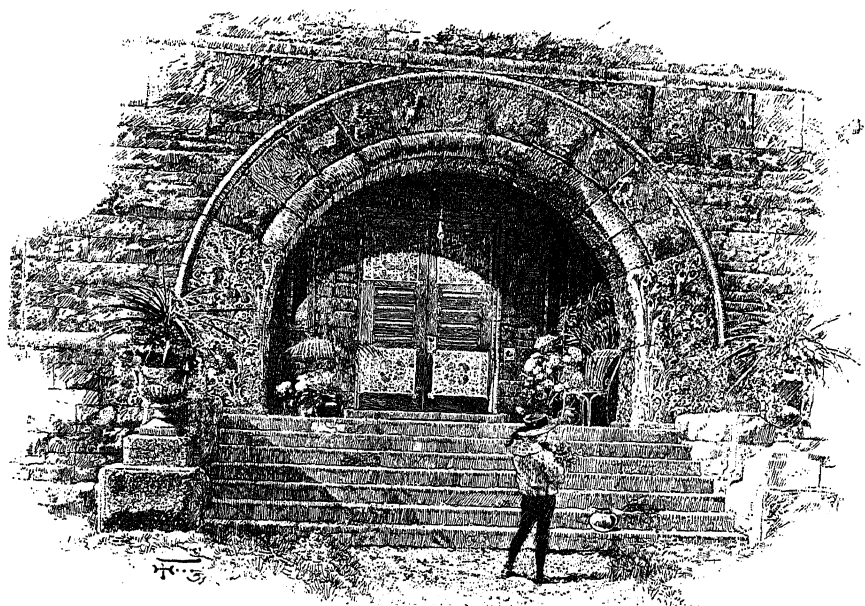


Fig. 85. Mould & McNichol. Porch, St. Paul.



Fig. 86. Gilbert & Taylor. Roofline from a dwelling,
St. Paul.

himself in works of goodness and nobleness—is surely a blessing to him, immense and indispensable; to him and to those about him. But that a bad man be ‘free’—permitted to unfold himself in *his* particular way—is, contrariwise, the fatallest curse you could inflict upon him; curse, and nothing else, to him and all his neighbors.”¹⁴³

There is here not a question of morals, but of knowledge and competency. The restraints in architecture of a recognized school, of a prevailing style, are useful and salutary in proportion to the absence of restraint that the architect is capable of imposing upon himself. The secular tradition of French architecture, imposed by public authority and inculcated by official academics, is felt as a trammel by many architects, who, nevertheless, have every reason to feel grateful for the power of design which this same official curriculum has trained and developed. In England the fear of the archæologists and of the ecclesiologists operated, during the period of modern Gothic at least, with equal force, though without any official sanction. To be “ungrammatical,” not to adopt a particular phase of historical architecture, and not to confine one’s self to it in a design, was there the unforgivable offence, even though the incongruities that resulted from transcending

¹⁴³ Carlyle, “Shooting Niagara: and After?”

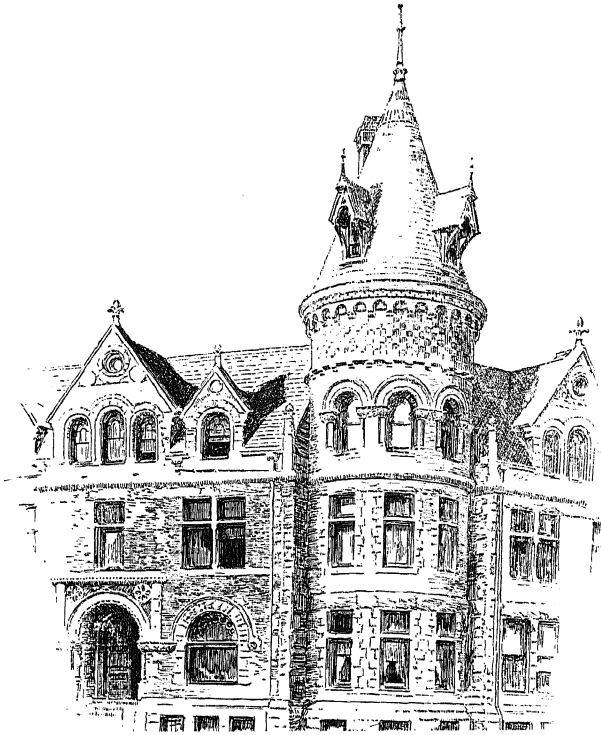


Fig. 87. Wilcox & Johnston. Dwellings, St. Paul.

it were imperceptible to an artist and obvious only to an archæologist. A designer thoroughly trained under either of these systems, and then transferred to this country as a practitioner, must feel, as many such a practitioner has in fact felt, that he was suddenly unshackled, and that his emancipation was an unmixed advantage to him; but it is none the less true that his power to use his liberty wisely came from the discipline that was now relaxed. The academic profusions of the Beaux Arts, or the exercises of a draughtsman, have served their purpose in qualifying him for independent design. The advocates of the curriculum of the English public schools maintain that, obsolete as it seems, even the practice of making Latin verses has its great benefits in imparting to the pupil the command of literary form and of beauty of diction. There are many examples to sustain this contention, as well as the analogous contention that a faithful study and

reproduction of antique or of mediæval architecture are highly useful, if not altogether indispensable, to cultivate an architect's power of design. Only it may be pointed out that the use of these studies is to enable the student to express himself with more power and grace in the vernacular, and that one no longer reverts to Latin verse when he has really something to say. The monuments that are accepted as models by the modern world are themselves the results of the labors of successive generations. It was by a secular process that the same structural elements employed at Thebes and Karnac were developed to the perfection of the Parthenon. In proportion to the newness of their problems it is to be expected that the efforts of our architects will be crude; but there is a vast difference between the crudity of a serious and matured attempt to do a new thing and the crudity of mere ignorance and self-sufficiency. Evidently the progress of American architecture will not be promoted by the labors of designers, whether they be "Western" or "Eastern," who have merely "lived in the alms basket" of architectural forms, and whose notion of architecture consists in multiplying "features," as who should think to enhance the expressiveness of the human countenance by adorning it with two noses.

One cannot neologize with any promise of success unless he knows what is already in the dictionary; and a professional equipment that puts its owner really in possession of the best that has been done in the world is indispensable to successful eclecticism in architecture. On the other hand, it is equally true that no progress can result from the labors of architects whose training has made them so fastidious that they are more revolted by the crudity of the forms that result from the attempt to express a new meaning than by the failure to make the attempt, and so conceal what they are really doing behind a mask of historical architecture, of which the elegance is quite irrelevant. This latter fault is that of modern architecture in general. The history of that architecture indicates that it is a fault even more unpromising of progress than the crudities of an emancipated architecture, in which the discipline of the designer fails to supply the place of the artificial check of an historical style. It is more feasible to tame exuberances than to create a soul under the ribs of death. The emancipation of American architecture is thus ultimately more hopeful than if it were put under academic bonds to keep the peace. It may freely be admitted that many of its manifestations are not for the present joyous, but



Fig. 88. A. H. Stem. Porch, St. Paul.

grievous, and that to throw upon the individual designer the responsibility withheld from a designer with whom fidelity to style is the first duty is a process that fails when his work, as has been wittily said, "shows no more self-restraint than a bunch of fire-crackers." But these papers have also borne witness that there are among the emancipated practitioners of architecture in the West men who have shown that they can use their liberty wisely, and whose work can be hailed as among the hopeful beginnings of a national architecture.

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William H. Jordy, Professor of Art at Brown University and author of *Henry Adams: Scientific Historian* and various articles in *Architectural Review* and *Architectural Forum*, is at present working on a study of twentieth-century American architecture. Ralph Coe is Curator of Paintings and Sculpture at the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City, Missouri.

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